

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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THIS is the 253rd issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the twenty-second volume. Many of our readers have been with us since Vol 1, No. 1 (March 1933). We are very proud of this long list of oldtimers and we hope that they will continue to find our little publication of value. Since interest in recorded music is at its all time high, more and more persons wish to have available impartial reviews of current recordings, and this is reflected by the huge number of new subscriptions we are receiving each month. We wish to take this opportunity to welcome these new readers, and we hope they will continue with us for many years to come.

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy mailed, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this practice beyond this month, so if you have not as yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues.

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From time to time, in this place, we have called our readers' attention to certain records for audiophiles, which records may or may not have much musical value. Four of these have come to notice this month.

The first disc is entitled "Musical Gadgetry," issued by the Spectrutone Sound Associates, Inc., and contains reproductions of various mechanical music makers, such as a carousel band organ, an organ grinder's "hurdy-gurdy," a street piano, various music boxes, etc. The disc was recorded with a Weathers Acoustic Sound Tracing System and the manufacturer claims a recorded range of from 20 to 25,000 cycles per second. The disc is made

primarily to afford a demonstration for the Weathers FM pick-up; it is extremely wide-range, but of course the musical value is questionable. 1-12" disc (*SPECTRUTONE AH-1002) \$5.95.

Emory Cook, on his Sounds of our Times label, has issued an LP disc called "The Drums of Rodriguez," progressive jazz in the Latin flavor by Willie Rodriguez and his band. This is very pleasant listening; those who already have a few of Cook's records will not need to be told that this one is really hi-fi. Mr. Rodriguez plays *Carioca*, *Mambo a la Basie*, *Frenesi*, *Hi Fi Mambo*, *Willie's Drums*, *Nocturnal*, *Almanac*, and *Lullaby to Frances*. 1-10" disc in factory-sealed pliofilm envelope (*SOT-1086) \$4.

Two LP's from Capitol complete this month's hi-fi offerings: "The Passions," with Bas Sheva and Les Baxter's Orchestra, and "High Fidelity Classics," excerpts from already-released Capitol LP's demonstrating its "Full Dimensional Sound" technique. "The Passions" is divided into seven bands, appropriately titled *Despair*, *Ecstasy*, *Hate*, *Lust*, *Terror*, *Jealousy*, and *Joy*. At the risk of being considered reactionary, we'd say that there is little to recommend this one except its fidelity; it is most unpleasant to hear. 1-10" disc (*CL-LAL-486) \$4.94.

"High Fidelity Classics" is a horse of a different color, being both good music and marvelous reproduction. Its contents are: *Billy the Kid*—Selection (Copland); *Sevilla* (Albeniz); *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* (Deliuss); *Symphony No. 6 in F*—3rd Movement (excerpt) (Beethoven); *Quatuor*—2nd movement (excerpt) (Villa-Lobos); *Quintet for Piano and Strings*—3rd movement (Shostakovich). Here is a nice variety of types of classical music which will put your phonograph

to the test. 1-10" disc (*CL-LAL-9024) \$4.94.

If any or all of the above discs are not available through your local dealer, orders addressed to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

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NOTE: Last month we listed the prices of *CAMBRIDGE CRS-201 and *CAMBRIDGE CRS-202 (p. 4) as \$4 each. After we went to press we were advised that the correct price was \$4.95 each. We deeply regret this error and apologize for any inconvenience caused our readers thereby.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-one years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning March 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Copland: *El Salon Mexico*. One side, and Copland: *Appalachian Spring*. Boston Symphony Orchestra—Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1134) \$5.72. (TNR Apr. '39 & Mar '46).

Verdi: *Il Trovatore* (highlights). Mancini, Pirazzini, Lauri-Volpi, Tagliabue, and Cololla with Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana—Previtali. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50153) \$5.95 (TNR Jan. '52).

Puccini: *Tosca* (highlights). Guerrini, Poggi and Silveri with Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana—Molinari-Pradelli. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50152) \$5.95 (TNR Apr. '52).

ORCHESTRA



Modern French Music. Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8244) \$5.70.

CONTENTS: *Le Boeuf sur le Toit* (Milhaud); *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (Ravel); (3) *Gymnopédies* (Satie); *Pastorale d'Été* (Honegger).

The three *Gymnopédies* by Erik Satie appear for the first time on LP, which should be good news because of the demands of some folks for these clever works. RCA Victor had two of them in the catalog a number of years ago. Written originally for piano

in 1888, the first and third of them were orchestrated by Debussy, who did this when he could not always find time and energy to orchestrate his own music—a tribute to their beauty and importance. The second was orchestrated by Richard Jones especially for this recording. The title is a word coined by Satie. His biographer, Rollo Myers, suggests that it was derived from the Greek word for an annual festival where dances and gymnastics were performed in honor of fallen warriors. In case you have never heard them, they are slow moving, reflective, rather pastoral in nature, and always graceful and charming. Vladimir Golschmann conducts these pieces with style and deftness.

Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* is a familiar work, also originally written for piano, but better known in the orchestral dress which the composer supplied for four of the six sections. Golschmann's reading is satisfactory, but not up to Ansermet's effort (*L-LL-795).

The two remaining items in this collection fit in nicely; Honegger's lovely summery sketches is in strong contrast to Milhaud's brash and jazzy "The Nothing Doing Bar." Although a member of "The Six," Honegger did not subscribe to all their capricious notions, and such romantic writing as this rustic picture was more his true nature. Milhaud was another case entirely. He described *Le Boeuf* as a rondo-like assembly of popular tunes, tangos, maxixes, and sambas (some of them remembered from his sojourn at the French legation in Rio de Janeiro), all joined together with a recurring theme. The setting is an American bar during Prohibition days, where some comically macabre events take place—including the decapitation of a policeman by an electric fan. This was the kind of thing that made "The Six" famous. All of this music can now be heard in better perspective, and not many folks would call it "modern." We think that is the only error Capitol made in this disc—the title—but then, what else could you call it? The reproduction is good, but not of Capitol's best; surfaces are super-smooth. S.

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67*. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Erich Kleiber. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-912) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64*. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1780) \$5.72.

Advance comments from the manufacturer, several annotators, and some of the public who have heard it, had prepared us to expect this recording of the indestructible Beethoven *Fifth* to be the recording—the best ever. And for once they seem to be entirely correct. This one beggars description and defies criticism. It is certainly one of the most superb examples of recorded orchestral sound. London has reproduced the renowned Amsterdam Concertgebouw with a tonal splendor that will have hi-fi addicts drooling from the opening "fate motive" right through to the

final resounding chord. The softer passages of the second movement have an aural elegance that melt into the succeeding crescendos in such a way that it can only be described as thrilling. The disc is not recorded at an unusually high dynamic level (London's discs seldom are), but the quality and the texture of the sound are what make this disc so fine. Kleiber's reading serves to show how sane and traditional a reading can be and still have a bit of resilience and warmth, which goes far in placing it at the head of the long list of recordings of this work. We prefer it to any of the others, despite the fact that it is spread over two 12" sides, which fact may partly account for the sweetness and lack of sizzle.

If London's Beethoven *Fifth* is the best on discs, so then is this new RCA Victor recording of the Tchaikovsky *Fifth* the greatest. Many of us have waited years for a really vivid and imaginative reading of this masterly romantic canvas, and this is it. Here is Leopold Stokowski at the height of his interpretive powers, with an orchestra of such virtuoso talent that it can perform perfectly every shade and subtlety of his direction. Those who tolerate Tchaikovsky, and nothing more, will not go for this reading; they are advised to take Ormandy or any of the several other fine recordings available. But for those who really love the beauty and inspiration of Tchaikovsky's music, and are not afraid to admit it, this reading will prove stimulating, to say the least. As an orchestral performance, and as a splendid reproduction, it is to be admired by anyone, for the playing in this set is thrilling in its sheer perfection of ensemble, gorgeous tone, and sincere intensity. The jacket notes, written by Leopold Stokowski, are a key to his insight and feeling for the score. We can proffer nothing but praise for this magnificent recording. S.

Grieg: Peer Gynt, Op. 23 (Original Stage Version). Soloists and Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Odd Gruner-Hegge. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10148) \$4.85.

Music from Modern Norway. Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Oivin Fjeldstad. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10149) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Rondo Amoroso, Op. 14, No. 7; Galdreslatten—Symphonic Dance with Passacaglia, Op. 20; Sinfonia Dolorosa, Op. 19 (Saeverud). The Cemetery by the Sea, Op. 20; Michelangelo Sonnet, Op. 17, No. 1; The Silent Island, Op. 21 (Valen).

Norwegian Pop Concert. Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10150) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Entrance March of the Boyards; Norwegian Rhapsody No. 1 (Halvorsen). Norwegian Artists' Carnival (Svendsen). The Herd Girl's Sunday; La Melancholie (Bull). Elegiac Melody (Gruner-Hegge). Valdres March (Hanssen). Borgulv the Fiddler; Rustic Dance (from "Little Kersti") (Eggen).

The existence of two orchestral suites drawn from the incidental music to *Peer Gynt* has made many

of these excerpts enormously popular and at the same time has also created a certain amount of resentment in many listeners' minds; one can hear too much even of a good thing. With the release of this carefully planned disc containing some thirteen selections arranged in proper dramatic sequence, the music acquires a new significance. All the music from the two suites plus such unfamiliar items as the *Dance of the Mountain King's Daughter*, the episode of the *Saeter Girls* and the *Prelude* to the play are included. The logically worked out analysis and discussion of Ibsen's play supplied on the jacket (the work of David Hall) adds immeasurably to the listener's understanding and consequent enjoyment of the music. The role of Peer Gynt is read by Alfred Maurstad and Solvejg is sung by Eva Prytz, a lyric soprano who reveals considerable beauty of tone and the ability to sing with expression. The Oslo Philharmonic is not a large orchestra, but they play well, obviously enjoying the work. For a real musical and dramatic treat, this modestly priced disc will be hard to beat.

Mercury's Norwegian explorations continue with a sampling of the works of two "modern" composers, Harald Saeverud (1897-) and Fartein Valen (1887-1952). Of the two, Saeverud's work is the most conventional, musically speaking, and is the sort that is ideal for phonographic exploitation, since it does not reveal all its beauties in a single hearing. This is particularly true of the *Sinfonia Dolorosa*, written during the occupation of Norway by the Nazis. Valen offers a bit more of a problem on first hearing, although it is a problem capable of resolution by repeated playings. Musically, Valen may be considered a disciple of Schönberg but toned-down by his studies of Bach and Palestrina. The disc is warmly recommended to all serious music lovers as well as those interested only in new music.

The last disc, the *Norwegian Pop Concert* is exactly what its name implies and from the opening *Valdres March* to the closing *Rustic Dance* is melodious and, if the term may be properly applied to something Norwegian, exotic.

Good recording and exceptionally informative notes feature all three records. W.

Adam: Giselle (complete ballet). L'Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra (Paris) conducted by Richard Blareau. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-869) \$5.95.

Bach—arr. Walton: The Wise Virgins (Ballet Suite). One side, and **Scarlatti—arr. Tommasini: The Good-Humored Ladies** (Ballet Suite). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Lit-schauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-440) \$5.95.

Here is a sterling pair of ballet discs. *Giselle* is the oldest ballet to retain its place in the current repertoire, being first produced at the Paris Opera in 1841. The French operatic composer Adolphe Adam, best known for his Christmas song *Cantique de Noël*, wrote the music to a story based on a book

of Heine. The story is a good one, with some dramatic interest and continuity, all of which is nicely told on the jacket notes. The music is typical of the place and the era in which it was written; it is charmingly tuneful and graceful. Whether two sides of a twelve-inch LP of it will be too much for most folks is a question. Those who have seen and enjoyed the ballet will appreciate it more, others may find it too much of a good thing. It is nice innocuous background music, several grades above the usual popular dinner music. The performance and reproduction are splendid in every respect, so those who are interested in this music may be assured that this is the best version of it (the complete work) and that no other is likely to supersede it for a good while.

The Vanguard record is one of the finest discs of ballet music we have yet heard. Not only are the performances superb and the reproduction of the best, but the music is wonderful too. *The Good-Humored Ladies* is a generally boisterous affair, light-hearted and bubbling, fashioned by Tommasini from five sonatas for harpsichord by the great Domenico Scarlatti. First performed in 1920, it has since become standard repertoire—ballet and orchestral. It is good music and good fun. But the prize work among all three that we are considering is the suite by the contemporary English composer, William Walton, drawn from the music of Bach. From five of the cantatas and a chorale from the St. Matthew Passion, the six-section ballet suite is wonderful listening apart from any stage business. This is one ballet that makes good music for home listening. The actual ballet is a masque-like presentation of the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins as told in St. Matthew. Anyone who likes orchestral transcriptions of Bach's music should not be without this set, for he can place it in that category rather than in ballet music. It is music of surpassing beauty, and Litschauer plays it beautifully. S.

Ippolitov-Ivanov: Caucasian Sketches, Op. 10. One side, and **Borodin: Prince Igor—Polovtsian Dances.** And **Borodin: In the Steppes of Central Asia.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4815) \$5.95.

Ippolitov-Ivanov: Caucasian Sketches, Op. 10. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnole, Op. 34.** And **Tchaikovsky: Marche Slav, Op. 31.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Schuechter. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3022) \$4.85.

Moussorgsky Orchestral Program. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3030) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Khovantschina—Suite; Fair at Sorochinsk—Suite; Night on Bald Mountain; Intermezzo Symphonique in Modo Classico; Scherzo in B-flat; Turkish March.*

Anyone who does not already own the repertoire

staples which Mitropoulos offers on the Columbia disc can do no better than to get this one. The coupling is a sure-fire one, and the performances are also sure-fire. Mitropoulos' readings of both works are masterpieces, and the orchestra's performances are capital. Added to all this is reproduction of staggering brilliance featuring percussion recording that will make this a hi-fi favorite. The *Polovtsian Dances* are performed orchestrally, with no chorus, which seems to be the way favored by most record buyers, and Mitropoulos has a perfect combination of wild abandon and control that is ideal. His reading of the *Caucasian Sketches* displaces our previous favorite, the recording by Désormière, if for nothing more than the quality of reproduction. This is truly a splendid disc, and has our highest recommendation.

The M-G-M disc is worth while only for the choice of coupling it offers. If you want these three particular selections, here they are on one disc, at a good price, and all competently played. However, each is available elsewhere on LP in a more striking rendition—such as the *Caucasian Sketches* noted above.

The *Moussorgsky Program* is an interesting disc and contains first appearances on LP of most of the material listed. From the uncompleted opera "Fair at Sorochinsk" we have the *Overture* and *Hopak* (Liadov edition)—*Hopak* is rather familiar and is often played as a piano solo. The *Khovantschina* suite has the lovely *Prelude*, the evocative *Dances of the Persian Slaves*, and the *Entr'acte*. As the jacket notes claim: "They represent national music of the finest brand and occasionally quote actual folk themes." We would agree that this is good national music, and many music lovers will find much that is new, fresh, and mighty interesting in this collection of Moussorgsky music. It is all well performed by the expert Philharmonia Orchestra of London under Walter Susskind, and given satisfactory reproduction. S.

Hindemith: Mathis der Maler. One side, and **Hindemith: Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Op. 30.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4816) \$5.95.

Ormandy has been somewhat a champion of Hindemith's music; his performances of it are usually sincere and intense, and of course, have the benefit of an expert orchestra. Previous LP's of either of the works here presented are relegated to second place for any or all of the following reasons: interpretive ability, quality of orchestral performance, excellence of reproduction. This disc, then, is at the top of the list, and is about the most enjoyable record of orchestral music by Hindemith.

Mathis der Maler is by now a score which most music lovers have heard several times. It is a most impressive work, very descriptive, and sustains interest well. Though the opera *Mathis der Maler* was composed about 1930, it was not performed in its entirety until 1938. It may have been the delay in

getting a complete performance that caused Hindemith in 1934 to construct the present "symphony" from the operatic score. Each movement depicts an important panel of the Isenheim altar-piece, while the score as a whole makes use of several old ecclesiastical chants. Though called a symphony, it does not follow any prescribed symphonic form. The first movement, *Angelic Concert*, serves as the opera's overture; the second movement, *The Entombment*, is an intermezzo in the final scene, and the concluding section, *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, originally written with chorus, appears in the sixth of the opera's seven scenes.

The *Concert Music for String Orchestra and Brass Instruments* belongs to the group of works which some of the leading composers of the day wrote for the fiftieth anniversary of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. This one was composed in December, 1930. The brasses and strings are employed in contrast with each other and with the combined orchestral body much in the manner of the eighteenth century concerto grosso. The work is divided into two main sections. It is appealing music, containing some rich sonorities, and many beautiful quiet sections. In both of these major works by the learned composer, Ormandy leads the orchestra in performances which could hardly be bettered, and Columbia has contributed excellent reproduction. S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*CML-4817) \$5.95.

The Cleveland Orchestra is vying for third place among American orchestras, and some folks along the Eastern seaboard here seem to think they have it. Under George Szell they have indeed attained an excellence of ensemble that is enviable. This record demonstrates some fine playing by the orchestra. We would say this is a nearly ideal reading of the Schumann Second if the tempi were not quite so fast in the first two movements. This is characteristic of Szell, who is often guilty of driving the music a bit hard. He is not completely heartless, however, as the third movement illustrates, for in this expressive music, actually the climax of the whole symphony in depth of feeling, he is the soul of compassion. If you do not feel the first two movements are too brisk, you will probably prefer this recording to any others now on LP. The final movement is played mighty fast under Szell's hands, but this one can stand it, and the Clevelanders do it with precision. Previously we had shown preference for a recording of this work by the Munich Philharmonic under Eugen Papst; other later discs of the work included excellent versions by Stokowski and Schuricht. In matters of interpretive style and quality of reproduction the three "S's"—Szell, Stokowski, and Schuricht each have much to offer, and a preference on our part would have to be an arbitrary decision. We rather prefer Stokowski's gentler manner, but tastes in the interpretation of Schumann vary, and many

favor a strengthening factor in these scores. Whatever your ideas may be, one of these will fill the bill.

The jacket notes for this disc, written by Charles Burr, are an improvement over some of the sketchy notes Columbia has supplied recently. These notes have interesting material about Schumann and the symphony and the conductor, and are worth reading. We hope Columbia continues in a like vein for all their LP jackets. S.

Bach: (4) Suites for Orchestra. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 2-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-530/1) \$11.90.

Bach: (4) Suites for Orchestra. The Hewitt Orchestra. 2-12" discs (*HS-HSL-90/1) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: Suite No. 1 in C; Suite No. 2 in B minor. (*HS-HSL-90) \$5.95.

Suite No. 3 in D; Suite No. 4 in D. (*HS-HSL-91) \$5.95.

It is not often that a reviewer has such an easy task! There is no question about the superiority of the Bach Guild recording of Bach's Four Suites for Orchestra. Prohaska, one of the outstanding younger European conductors, whose several recordings have brought high praise from the American critics, has done a masterful job. He has excellent musicians to work with, and the camaraderie he has developed in his ensemble is evidenced by the excellent results attained. The reproduction is much superior to that achieved by the Haydn Society, and the packaging is not comparable. The Haydn Society supplies two discs each in a separate jacket with not one word about the artists or the recording. Bach Guild houses its discs in an album with notes containing interesting and vital information about both the artists and the recording. As both sets are the same price, it would seem to us that practically every music lover would select the Bach Guild recording, even over Reiner (*V-LM-6012, TNR Jan. '54). The Haydn Society discs may be purchased separately, while the Bach Guild version is sold only as a unit.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral")—4th movement ("Ode to Joy"). Eileen Farrell (soprano), Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano), Jan Peerce (tenor), Norman Scott (baritone), Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-10" disc (*V-LRM-7046) \$2.99. (TNR Nov. '52).

Every so often one observes something that strikes him as spectacularly ingenious and makes him feel more the fool for not having thought of it himself. This disc strikes us as just that way. The last movement of the "Choral" Symphony of Beethoven has long been our favorite part of the work (on our copy the choral movement is worn, we fear, much more than the rest of the set); and RCA Victor has now brought out the Fourth Movement, as it were, just for us; for which we extend to them many thanks.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Hermann Abendroth. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-12) \$3.50.

Tchaikovsky: Ouverture Solennelle "1812," Op. 49. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Gerhard Wiesenhütter. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Pfleger. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-16) \$3.50.

Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Hermann Abendroth. One side, and **Stravinsky: L'Oiseau de Feu.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Ernest Borsamsky. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-18) \$3.50.

Urania has recently released the three LP discs listed above in its moderate priced "Request Series." As all of these selections are very popular ones, we presume that Urania believes that sales will be of such a size that its venture will be profitable. This is entirely possible because all of the recordings are quite good, both as to performances and reproduction. Buyers get good values in all cases.

R. Strauss: Don Quixote, Op. 35. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss, with Pierre Fournier (violoncello) and Moraweg Ernst (viola). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-855) \$5.95.

Clemens Krauss is one of the truly great and inspired conductors of the music of his long time friend Richard Strauss; and with the world famous violoncellist, Pierre Fournier, in care of the solo parts, this recording of *Don Quixote* rates with the best Strauss that comes to mind. As London has seen to it that the finest of reproduction has been achieved, we can recommend the present LP disc without reservation.

Tchaikovsky: The Swan Lake (Ballet Suite). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Robert Irving. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1064) \$2.98.

This very satisfactory recording of the music from one of the most popular ballets in the repertory is an excellent value at its modest price.

CONCERTO



Korngold: Concerto in D, Op. 35. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. One side, and **Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1782) \$5.72.

We are not going to say that Korngold's Concerto is great music, but we are going to say that it abounds in beautiful melodies; and as played by Heifetz it is a mighty pleasant work to listen to—in fact it is quite

thrilling. Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole* is an ideal companion piece—it is not profound, but it has been greeted with wild applause by audiences all over the world for the last seventy-five years. Let's not try to measure the profundity of this music; let's relax and enjoy it as it is played for us by one of the greatest violinists of all time, Jascha Heifetz.

Jolivet: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. Lucette Descaves (piano) with l'Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by Ernest Bour. One side, and **Jolivet: Concerto for Trumpet, Piano and Strings.** Robert del Motte (trumpet), Serge Baudo (piano) with l'Orchestre Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by Ernest Bour. And **Jolivet: Andante for Strings.** L'Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by Ernest Bour. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5239) \$5.95.

Menasce: Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra. One side, and **Menasce: Divertimento on a Children's Song.** Jacques de Menasce (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Edmund Appia. And **Menasce: Petite Suite pour le Piano.** Jacques de Menasce (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-442) \$5.95.

Jolivet and Menasce are composers new to the LP lists. Although each is the same age, both being born in August 1905, Menasce is the more likely to be a name known to our readers. He has been in the United States since 1941, shuttling back and forth to give concerts in Europe and America. His music has been played occasionally here in the concert halls and on the air. Jolivet's music has had but a couple of hearings in our land, and after hearing this disc, many of you will believe you know why.

André Jolivet, according to the brash and rather peculiarly written notes on the record jacket, has been in and out of musical life in his native Paris since the thirties, what with the wars and changing musical scene of that land. He is now considered the most promising new composer, the leader of the *avant-garde*, among contemporary French composers. He has a determined opposition to the neo-classicism of the day and is shaping up as a significant force in the evolution of twentieth century music—so they say. If you wish to hear a sample of the music of tomorrow, try some of the *Concerto for Piano*, along with a bromide to steady you. Pay no attention to the *Andante for String Orchestra*, for that dates from 1934, when the composer was twenty-nine, and is rather old-fashioned in that it has moments that are nearly pleasant listening. The *Concertino for Trumpet, Piano, and Strings* (1948) gets more in the Jolivet spirit, and makes the Shostakovich *Piano Concerto*, which it resembles in scoring, sound like so much organized musical thought. The performances on this disc probably do full justice to the music, and the reproduction likewise.

Jacques de Menasce writes music that is possible to enjoy even if you do not venture too far into

modern music as a rule. The two shorter suites are both enjoyable. The *Divertimento on a Children's Song* was premiered by Rudolf Ganz at a New York Philharmonic Children's Concert, so you can gather that it is pleasing and worth while. Menasce is an accomplished artist as well as a composer, and his piano playing has beauty, style and technical facility. The piano concerto, his second, composed in 1938-9, owes most to the romantic period of music, although it has a fresh slant. We found it a compact and interesting work. Vanguard's reproduction is super-super. S.

Respighi: Concerto Gregoriano. Kurt Siehler (violin) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Ernest Borsamsky. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7100) \$5.95.

Respighi's *Concerto Gregoriano* will probably be new to the vast majority of record collectors. We recall a German 78 rpm recording by Paul Richartz (violin) and the Berlin Civic Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger, but we doubt that more than a very few copies ever found their way across the Atlantic.

The *Concerto Gregoriano* for violin and orchestra dates from 1921 and was first performed under the direction of Dr. Karl Muck at Hamburg, Germany. The composer drew his inspiration from Gregorian Chant; the first two movements are quite colorful, and the Gregorian melodies are developed in a highly romantic mood. In the third and final movement Respighi seems to have let his enthusiasm get the better of him, for he blasts out with great peals of orchestral tones from which the delicate Gregorian melodies have fled—perhaps in fear. Some music lovers may like this last movement; it is certainly exciting.

We have given our readers a hint or two as to what this work is like. It is now up to them as to whether they wish to investigate it further.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 5 in F, Op. 103. One side, and **d'Indy: Symphony on a French Mountain Air, Op. 25.** Fabienne Jacquinot (piano) with the Westminster Symphony Orchestra (London) conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3068) \$4.85.

The Saint-Saëns *Concerto No. 5* appears for the first time in a domestic release, and while it is not a popular concerto it is at least a pleasant diversion. Saint-Saëns could fabricate melodies that fall easily on the ear, and this work abounds in these ingratiating tunes and sweet harmonic devices just as all this man's works have. It is music of grace and charm and typical of the man and the era in which he wrote. Being a pianist himself, Saint-Saëns is lavish in virtuoso technical displays, but they are always clothed in pretty musical dress and one is not usually aware of bravura effects from a purely technical standpoint. Like so much music, this work is no milestone in the literature, no heaven-storming crea-

tion; but, in its own way, it is a mild and pleasing composition that most folks may enjoy hearing. The performance on this disc is one that is appropriately graceful and stylish and not overdone. Fabienne Jacquinot is a talented artist, and she plays this type of music admirably. The orchestral portion is in the good hands of Anatole Fistoulari and a fine orchestral group.

With the d'Indy *Symphony on a French Mountain Air*, Fabienne Jacquinot is up against the recorded competition of Robert Casadesus, with Münch and the New York Philharmonic (*C-ML-4298) in a performance generally considered mighty fine. Casadesus' coupling is the popular *Symphonic Variations* of César Franck. We believe a man of the stature of Casadesus, with his impeccable taste and exceptional keyboard finesse, has the advantage over the younger Miss Jacquinot, and to us the over-all effect he produces is more fine-grained. Those who wish the Saint-Saëns concerto will not be accepting a poor d'Indy reading by any means; however, if you are primarily after the d'Indy, listen to Casadesus before deciding. MGM's reproduction is very fine on both sides of this disc. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Haydn: (6) Quartets, Op. 76. The Schneider Quartet. 3-12" discs in box (*HS-HSQ-L) \$18.50.

CONTENTS: *Quartet No. 1 in G; Quartet No. 2 in D minor ("Quinten").* (*HS-HSQ-34) \$5.95.

Quartet No. 3 in C ("The Emperor"); Quartet No. 4 in B-flat ("Sunrise"). (*HS-HSQ-35) \$5.95.

Quartet No. 5 in D; Quartet No. 6 in E-flat. (*HS-HSQ-36) \$5.95.

The Haydn Society continues with its fine series of recordings of the Haydn String Quartets by the Schneider Quartet. The present album contains the six quartets of Opus 76. As these recordings are well up to the high standard of the previous issues, we are sure that they will be cordially welcomed by those music lovers who are assembling this series. The discs in this album may be purchased separately at \$5.95 each.

Wolf: Quartet in D minor. One side, and **Wolf: Italian Serenade in G.** New Music Quartet: Broadus Erle and Matthew Raimondi (violins), Walter Trampler (viola) and Claus Adam (violin-cello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4821) \$5.95.

When one thinks of Hugo Wolf he thinks of his songs or his *Italian Serenade*. However, he did compose a string quartet of considerable merit, as one may see when he listens to the present recording. It dates from 1884 but was not performed publicly until a few days before the composer's death in 1903. Wolf,

in addition to being a composer, was also a well-known critic, and it is said that his sharp pen caused him to make many enemies among the musicians of Vienna; for that reason he found it difficult to interest them in his chamber works. If the present quartet might have been heard when it was completed, instead of nearly twenty years later, it probably would have been well received; and the composer would have been encouraged to turn his attention to other works in that field.

Cowell: Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano (1945).

Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Carlo Bussotti (piano). One side, and **Shapero: Sonata for Piano, Four Hands (1941)**. Harold Shapero and Leo Smit (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4841) \$5.95.

Harris: Sonata for Violin and Piano. Josef Gingold (violin) and Johanna Harris (piano). One side, and **Palmer: Quartet for Piano and Strings (1947)**. John Kirkpatrick (piano) with members of the Walden Quartet of the Univ. of Illinois. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4842) \$5.95.

Kirchner: Quartet No. 1. American Art Quartet. One side, and **Fine: Quartet (1952)**. R. Mann and R. Koff (violins), R. Hillyer (viola) and A. Winograd (violincello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4843) \$5.95.

Mennin: Quartet No. 2. One side, and **Imbrie: Quartet in B-flat.** Julliard String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4844) \$5.95.

Bowles: Music for a Farce. David Glazer (clarinet), Herbert C. Mueller (trumpet), Elden C. Bailey (percussion) and William Masselos (piano). And **Bowles: Scènes d'Anabase (1932)**. William Hess (tenor), Josef Marx (oboe) and William Masselos (piano). One side, and **Dello Joio: Variations and Capriccio for Violin and Piano.** Patricia Travers (violin) and Norman Dello Joio (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4845) \$5.95.

Berger: Quartet in C for Woodwinds (1941). Fairfield Wind Ensemble: Harold Bennett (flute), Harry Schulman (oboe), David Weber (clarinet), Elias Carmen (bassoon). And **Berger: Duo for Violoncello and Piano.** Bernard Greenhouse (violincello) and Anthony Makas (piano). One side, and **Hill: Sextet for Wind Instruments and Piano, Op. 39.** New York Woodwind Ensemble: S. Baron (flute), J. Roth (oboe), D. Glazer (clarinet), R. Pyle (horn), B. Garfield (bassoon) assisted by Lilian Kalir (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4846) \$5.95.

Columbia is proceeding with its recordings in the "Modern American Music Series." These recordings are to be of modern American music and the selections are to be chosen by a committee consisting of Virgil Thomson, Aaron Copland, Henry Cowell, Goddard Lieberson and William Schuman. Mr. Thomson is the chairman. The compositions are to be recorded by artists of the composer's own choice and are to be recorded under his personal direction

or supervision. Nothing has seemingly been left undone to see that the music is given to the public just as the composer would have it presented. The committee has made every effort to see that duplication has been avoided. It is the committee's aim to see that as great a variety of works of merit as possible are given the opportunity of being heard by those who listen to recorded music.

The six LP discs listed above have been made available recently.

CHORAL



Beethoven: Missa Solemnis in D, Op. 123. (Sung in Latin). Lois Marshall (soprano); Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano); Eugene Conley (tenor); Jerome Hines (bass); Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw; and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6013) \$11.44.

The long awaited Toscanini recording of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* has finally materialized. For once a recording lives up to and, in some respects, surpasses expectations. Here, it may be safely stated, is a performance of Beethoven's majestic work that will stand for some years to come.

The performance is all the more amazing when one considers that the work, in all probability, offers more difficulties per bar than almost any comparable piece. Like the Bach *B minor Mass*, it is the conception of a mind that towers far above the ordinary; but the ideas it endeavors to embrace are even beyond the composer's comprehension—the result is a "flawed" masterpiece, yet far and away finer than the masterpieces of many another composer. It is as though Beethoven wrestled with an angel; he emerges from the struggle halt and lame.

And yet, on hearing these discs, one is almost persuaded. Toscanini has wrought a minor miracle and the *Mass* receives a coherent and intensely musical performance. The orchestra, which plays a very important part in the proceedings, is really heard. Chorus and soloists (all excellent, by the way) are not given undue prominence, but rather both groups complement each other in a way that no other conductor has achieved via records. Toscanini's version of the *Mass* is, as one might expect, a dramatic one, but not excessively so. He preserves a sense of mystery and stresses rather the essential greatness and sincerity of Beethoven's conception.

A word of praise must again be given RCA Victor for the fine technical job the engineers have done. A single microphone was used with an auxiliary "mike" for special pickups. The results are splendid. More accolades are due the package designer for one of the most tasteful and attractive albums of the year. Briefly it is a black album with a transparent window behind which are hands clasped in prayer from an Albrecht Dürer painting.

An earlier recording of the *Mass in D* which was

favorably reviewed in these columns (TNR Nov. '51) is outclassed on all counts. W.

Wilbye: English Madrigals. The Randolph Singers conducted by David Randolph. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5221) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Flora gave me fairest flower; Adieu, sweet Amaryllis; And though my love abounding; As fair as morn; I fall, oh stay me; Weep O mine eyes; Hard destinies are love; Fly not so swift, my dear; Oft have I vowed; Sweet honey sucking bees; Yet sweet take heed; Happy, oh happy he; Ye that do live in pleasures; O what shall I do?; Thus saith my Cloris bright; All pleasure is of this condition; Weep, weep mine eyes.*

John Wilbye (1574-1638) is one of those fascinating characters with which the history of music abounds, concerning whom we know a few tantalizing facts, a little of his music, and almost nothing else. We know his father was a tanner and well-to-do—we know Wilbye never married and died comfortably wealthy (could there be any connection between these last two items, or is that cynical?) and, finally, that he was of a gloomy turn of mind, as evidenced by the texts he chose for his musical settings.

Wilbye wrote no instrumental music, only the two sets of madrigals: one dating from 1598, the other from 1609. There are representative selections from each collection included on this disc. All the madrigals recorded here are of more than passing interest—Wilbye is considered by many to be the finest of the English (if not nearly of all) composers in this Gray (in *The History of Music*) writes of Wilbye's "impeccable purity of line and grace of style" and again of "a dazzling brilliance and sheer perfection of workmanship."

The Randolph Singers need no introduction to lovers of this form of music. To those who have yet to make their acquaintance, this record will provide an excellent introduction. As usual, the singing is impeccable, the recording of a very superior order; and detailed notes, as well as the complete texts, are provided. W.

Mendelssohn: St. Paul Oratorio, Op. 36. (Sung in German). Laurence Dutoit (soprano), Hans Loeffler (tenor), Maria Nussbaumer (alto), Otto Wiener (bass), Akademie Kammerchor and Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-8362) \$11.90.

Mendelssohn's *Paulus*, the musically lesser known brother of *Elijah*, receives its first complete recorded Vienna Akademie Kammerchor. After hearing the performance by Ferdinand Grossmann and the work one readily understands why it is (1) less widely known than *Elijah* and (2) why the first complete recording was so long in coming.

St. Paul is an early work (it dates from the years 1834-36) and is singularly undramatic. Now, Men-

delsohn's talent did not lend itself particularly well form. There is an emotional content (in his work) that is unsurpassed by his contemporaries. Cecil to theatrical concepts, although in *Elijah* he achieves moments of great intensity (*Is not His work like a fire? And it is enough*). Sir George Grove is inclined to place the blame for lack of drama on the text; but anything more dramatic than the stoning of Stephen (the opening section of the work) would be hard to imagine. No, St. Paul is, unfortunately, nothing more than a string of arias, choruses and recitatives that, while some are very beautiful (*Be thou faithful and But the Lord is mindful of His own*), creates a feeling of dullness.

Grossmann and his soloists (who, by the way, sing in creditable fashion) cope with the turgid music and are often defeated. It is entirely possible however, that someone like Sir Thomas Beecham could revitalize the score. This is not to be considered as belittling Grossmann and his cohorts—but the British have always had a high regard for Mendelssohn and are, of course, oratorio specialists.

Vox's recording is good and the German and English texts are supplied. The issue remains, however, one for Mendelssohn enthusiasts; others are advised not to expect another *Elijah*. W.

Gabrieli: Motet ("Pater Peccavi"). And **Gabrieli: Missa ("Pater Peccavi").** One and one-half sides, and **Gabrieli: Motet ("Angelus ad pastores").** Choir of the Capella di Treviso directed by Msgr. Giovanni d'Alessi. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8370) \$5.95.

The music of Andrea Gabrieli (1510-1586), uncle of the more famous Giovanni and teacher of Sweelinck and Hassler as well as his nephew, is certainly not well known in this country. In fact, this is the first record to appear that is devoted to his art.

The works recorded here are, then, of considerable interest to all students of early baroque music. The mass *Pater Peccavi* is the major work on the disc and is what is known as a "parody" mass. The word parody in this instance does not have the generally accepted meaning of today, but rather means that the tunes and perhaps some of the polyphonic web of the mass have been borrowed from another composition. In this case it is one of Gabrieli's own works, the motet *Pater Peccavi*, which work is also recorded on this disc for comparative purposes.

All this music, however, it must be confessed, struck this writer as being a bit dull. Now this could be due to several circumstances—a lack of comprehension on the listener's part or a lethargic performance. After reading contemporary accounts of the wonderful performances in St. Mark's Church the writer is more inclined to feel the fault lies in the performance recorded here. In all events, one found the children's voices unpleasant and nasal

and the general tone of the recording uninteresting. The third item, the motet *Angelus ad pastores* has the merit of brevity.

Part of the difficulty, no doubt, lies in the performance; for who, nowadays, knows how the music should actually "sound"? The purchaser is assured, in the notes on the jacket, that the original manuscript is used, but even so, there can be no certainty that the dynamics, phrasing, and all the other components of an "authentic" performance are as they should be.

The disc is one for antiquarians; others had better hear it first. W.

McDonald: Builders of America (Washington and Lincoln). Claude Rains (narrator) with the Columbia Chamber Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Harl McDonald. One side, and **McDonald: Children's Symphony** (On Familiar Tunes). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Harl McDonald (TNR Nov. '50). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2220) \$4.

Harl McDonald's cantata for mixed voices, *Builders of America*, is one of those musical novelties that may be heard once with considerable interest; but we rather think that repeated hearings would soon begin to pall. This would be particularly true of the narrative sections that have been added to Edward Shenton's poem, which was the basis of this work. We suggest that *Builders of America* would be a terrific hit on the program for the commencement exercises of American high schools or colleges, especially in the middle-west. It is American to the core and so is this recording, except for Claude Rains' Oxford English. . . . Not so Mr. McDonald's *Children's Symphony*, which was issued on a 10-inch LP disc in 1950 coupled with Brand's *The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay* (See TNR November 1950). The *Children's Symphony* caught the fancy of children and many grown-ups; and especially the children never seem to tire of hearing it over and over again. It has become a standard piece for little folks and has caused many of them to become acquainted with the wonderful Philadelphia Orchestra.

OPERA



Bellini: I Puritani (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Tullio Serafin. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35035/7TP) \$14.85. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3502C) \$17.85.

Elvira.....Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Lord Arturo.....Giuseppe di Stefano (t)
Sir Giorgio.....Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs)
Sir Riccardo.....Rolando Panerai (bt)
Enrichetta.....Aurora Cattelani (ms)
Sir Bruno.....Angelo Mercuriali (t)
Lord Gualtiero.....Carlo Forti (bs)

If ever an opera could be called a "singer's opera,"

I Puritani is it. Written in 1835, it became a vehicle for one of the most fabulous quartets in the history of music: Grisi, Rubini, Tamburini and Blanche. The demands of the music, particularly as regards the tenor, are almost cruel by today's standards, and all four principals must be masters of *bel canto*. Now, a virtual miracle has come to pass, for Angel Records has found such a quartet, and the performance of *I Puritani* captured on these discs is one of surpassing beauty.

Easily the star of the performance, in this reviewer's opinion, is the gifted and brilliant young Sicilian tenor, Guiseppe di Stefano. Where and how this young man learned to sing with such musicianship and authority is hard to understand; but none-the-less he is a genuine musician whose phrasing and expression have seldom been approached in the last twenty years; in fact, the last tenor to sing in such a manner was the veteran Giovanni Martinelli. One indication of Stefano's musical acumen is revealed in his having the role of Arturo transposed downwards a tone and a half. Rubini, the original Arturo, boasted an E above high C (something the equivalent, nowadays, of a calf with two heads, and about as useful) and so the part was written with the high E's; otherwise Rubini would not have sung the role. Several tenors in this century have tried to sing the role in its original key but, instead of the notes being a musical C sharp or D flat, as is the case with Stefano, these other ill-advised tenors delivered themselves of an eldritch squeal that, insofar as records are concerned, was neither musical nor beautiful. Stefano's performance is a masterly one and ranks, in this writer's mind, as one of the finest recorded performances of all time.

Keeping pace with Stefano is Maria Callas, the Elvira. Her pure, lovely singing came as a very pleasant surprise to this writer whose previous experience with her in Cetra's *La Gioconda* was not a happy one. The wonderful mad scene *Qui la voce sua soave* is sung with haunting loveliness, while her singing in the finale of the opera stands out as the work of a superior artist.

On an equally high plane are Rolando Panerai and Nicola Rossi-Lemeni, who contribute much to the success of the ensemble singing, while Panerai's *Or dove fugg' io mai* and the subsequent rondo *Bel sogno beato* are beautifully sung. Nicola Rossi-Lemeni delivers *Canto il fior* with style and polish and the two team up in a rousing version of one of opera's most famous duets, *Suoni la tromba*.

Tullio Serafin's direction is sure and well-paced; the minor roles are competently cast and well sung. The chorus does well, and the engineers have captured the proceedings faithfully. The de luxe package contains a fine libretto and an illustrated History of La Scala. By and large, this is one of the most exciting operatic performances in the history of the phonograph. Don't miss it! W.

Wagner: Lohengrin (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Bavarian Radio Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 4-12" discs in album (*D-DX-131) \$23.40.

Henry I "The Fowler"Otto von Rohr (bs)
LohengrinLorenz Fehenberger (t)
ElsaAnnelies Kupper (s)
Frederick TelramundFerdinand Franz (bt)
OrtrudHelena Braun (ms)
HeerführerHans Braun (bt)

This is the second LP *Lohengrin* to appear and, to put it bluntly, it is not as good as its predecessor on Urania (*UR-URLP-225, TNR Dec. '52).

The title role is entrusted to Lorenz Fehenberger, an erratic tenor whose method of voice production leaves much to be desired. It is alternately throaty and guttural, then a bit thin and nasal. As if this were not enough, he is given to speeding up certain phrases in a way that does not make sense. There are occasions, unfortunately too few in number, when Herr Fehenberger sings very well indeed. His *Lohengrin*, however, does not convey the nobility of, say, Franz Volker's, or even George Vincent's. He is not able, as are the last two, to rise above the essential pomposity of the music, with the net result that his Knight is earth-bound.

Annelies Kupper is a passable Elsa, doing very well in the earlier part of the opera but letting down a little towards the end. Vocally, her equipment is all that is necessary. Ortrud (Helena Braun) is adequate, as are the others; but "adequate" singing is scarcely enough to sustain interest in an opera as long as *Lohengrin*.

Maybe some of the fault lies in Jochum's pedestrian direction. The *Prelude* is taken at a very slow pace and, incidentally, the monitoring butchers the climaxes. It is a wretched job. Elsewhere the recording is "adequate"—not up to the glowing sound of the earlier Urania set.

This *Lohengrin* is an eight sided affair as against ten sides for the other. A comparison of the two playing times was not feasible nor was a score available to determine cuts. In all events, the Urania set is so superior that the differences between the two recordings as regards content would be of interest only to passionate Wagnerians.

A first class libretto and copious notes on the opera by Ernest Newman are included. W.

Gounod: Faust (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Théâtre National de l'Opera conducted by André Cluytens. 4-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6400) \$22.88.

FaustNicolai Gedda (t)
MephistophelesBoris Christoff (bs)
ValentineJean Borthayre (bt)
WagnerRobert Jeantet (bt)
MargueriteVictoria de los Angeles (s)
SiebelMartha Angelici (s)
MarthaSolange Michel (ms)

Faust, Gounod's hardy perennial, has long been a

favorite with this reviewer. In fact, it might be said he cut his musical eyeteeth on its gorgeous melodies sung, unfortunately for subsequent performers, by Journet, Farrar and Caruso.

Nevertheless, this recording, made in Paris at the Théâtre National, has considerable merit. First there is the utterly charming Marguerite of Victoria de los Angeles. It is amazing how she keeps her essentially large voice throttled down to a youthful, almost girlish level in the *Roi de Thulé* and *Air des Bijoux* but, by the time the *Church Scene* is reached she increases the volume, the color darkens and the sound is much more mature. It is, perhaps, the only Marguerite of recent times where the prima donna has attempted a characterization. Marguerite is almost real.

Boris Christoff's Mephistopheles is a vocally splendid one, if a bit of a rough-neck histrionically. Actually there is no one today with such a powerful bass, and each note is produced and supported perfectly. It is an amazing performance, full of vitality and sheer animal spirit. There have been, to be sure, more subtle delineations of Gounod's rather gentlemanly devil but none, within this writer's ken, who have had more voice.

Nicolai Gedda, the young Swedish tenor who impressed so favorably in the Angel recording of *The Merry Widow* (TNR Jan. '54) sings charmingly in the title role. His voice is a bit light, and he is sometimes lost in the ensemble but, nonetheless, he is a suave, polished performer; his interpretation ranks with the best recorded Fausts of our time.

Valentine, in the person of Jean Borthayre (the only Frenchman among the principals, incidentally) is beautifully sung and acted—a sterling job from start to finish. The minor roles are competently handled.

M. Cluytens keeps a firm hand on the proceedings, chorus and orchestra, and a fine performance results. It is, by the way, the most complete *Faust* on discs, including, as it does, the *Walspurgisnacht* and portions of the *Garden Scene* that are usually omitted in performances in this country. Contrary to the usual Paris Opera practices, the baritone air *Avant de quitter ces lieux* is included.

Recorded sound is very good.

W.

Puccini: La Tosca (complete). (Sung in Italian). Solosists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Victor de Sabata. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35060/1TP) \$9.90. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3508B) \$11.90.

Floria ToscaMaria Meneghini Callas (s)
Mario CavaradossiGiuseppe di Stefano (t)
Baron ScarpiaTito Gobbi (bt)
Cesare AngelottiFranco Calabrese (bs)
SacristanMelchiorre Luise (bt)
SpolettaAngelo Mercuriali (t)

This is actually, believe it or not, the seventh complete recording of *La Tosca* and the fifth to be reviewed in these columns. It is, moreover, the first really satisfactory one.

In the title role Maria Callas is a fiery and utterly

convincing singer. Vocally, of course, she is more than equal to all occasions, and she brings the temperamental prima donna to life in no uncertain fashion. From the first act through to the bitter finale, she is at concert pitch and the impact of her portrayal is considerable.

Tito Gobbi is a very superior Baron Scarpia, and this writer feels that it is far and away the best recorded version of the role. Gobbi, by the way, is a genuine baritone, something of a curiosity in these days. His voice is even throughout its range and he is able, as are the other principals, to sing with expression. One comes away from his performance hating him, which is about the highest praise one can offer.

As for Giuseppe di Stefano's Cavaradossi, this writer is virtually speechless. Here is singing in the grand manner and truly beautiful. There is one thing about this singer, however, that requires a little comment. Many years ago there was a famous tenor named Jean de Reszke who retired from the operatic stage in 1901. M. Reszke always made a great point of what he called *l'amour de parole* (literally, love of the word)—that is, he was careful to enunciate clearly and wed words and music as the composer intended. Giuseppe di Stefano does this very same thing; each word is clearly pronounced, no slurring, no slovenly diction, with the result that his singing is the more beautiful. This, plus the rolled "r's" and sharply attacked labials, adds a dramatic quality to his performances that makes them as unique as they are vivid.

But one runs on. The minor roles are all well sung; particularly fine is the lick-spittle Spoletta sung by Angelo Mercuriali. Victor de Sabata, in his first complete operatic performance, does a fine job, emphasizing, curiously enough, the lyrical elements in the score, probably feeling (and, to this writer's mind, correctly) that the dramatics can take care of themselves.

Recording is fine and a beautiful libretto is supplied with the factory-sealed package. This recording of *Tosca* surpasses all others. W.

Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Florence May Festival conducted by Tullio Serafin. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35038/9TP) \$9.90. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3503B) \$11.90.

Lucia.....Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Edgardo.....Giuseppe di Stefano (t)
Lord Enrico.....Tito Gobbi (bt)
Raimondo.....Raffaele Arie (bs)
Lord Arturo.....Valiano Natali (t)
Alisa.....Anna Maria Canali (ms)
Normanno.....Gino Sarri (t)

This third *Lucia di Lammermoor* is really about the best version of this thrice familiar score that could be imagined. Donizetti's frail heroine has often been

miscast—the role became a favorite with many light coloratura sopranos who brought little more to the occasion than an agile larynx. It came as a distinct shock, then, to hear the part reinvested with some of its long absent drama and reality. Even the *Mad Scene* takes on an air of conviction when sung by Maria Callas, and this is high praise indeed. Elsewhere in the opera, notably in the opening scene, she is very attractive.

As Edgardo, Giuseppe di Stefano adds further laurels to his recorded performances. It does not often happen that a young artist is so assiduous in his search for perfection. Stefano does not, like so many, rely too much on his great natural gifts. The result is apparent in every phrase he sings. Thus, this amazing young man turns in an emotional characterization that never once spills over into cheapness; one that never becomes maudlin, but his grief and heart-break in the final scene are almost frightening in their intensity. His singing in the love duet, *Verano a te*, is a high spot in the first act.

Tito Gobbi as the evil brother is expertly cast and does extremely well, especially in the duet, *Après-sati, Lucia*. Raphael Arie is an impressive Raimondo and Gino Sarri a properly villainous Normanno. Tullio Serafin's direction leaves nothing to be desired; it is sensitive and coherent. His chorus and orchestra are spirited and the entire production comes alive in a manner one seldom hears. The sound is good but not quite as fine as in the La Scala recordings. The usual fine libretto and notes are supplied in the factory-sealed packages. W.

Youngest Member of a Great Tradition. Roberta Peters (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. Also featured are Luisa Tetrazzini (soprano), Amelita Galli-Curci (soprano) and Lily Pons (soprano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1786) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Lucia*—Regnava nel silenzio; *Puritani*—Son vergin vezzosa; *Puritani*—O redetemi la speme (recit.), Qui la voce sua soave (aria); *Puritani*—Vien diletto; *Sonnambula*—L'anello mio (recit.), Ah! Non credea mirarti (aria); *Sonnambula*—Ah! Non giunge; *Linda di Chamounix*—O luce di quest'anima (Peters). *Mignon*—Io son Titania (Tetrazzini). *Barbiere di Siviglia*—Una voce poco fa (Galli-Curci). *Lakmé*—Là-bas, dans la forêt (Pons).

The "Youngest Member of a Great Tradition" is a unique LP disc. The brilliant young coloratura of the Metropolitan Opera, Roberta Peters, sings six arias from her repertoire and the three final bands on the second side of this disc are given over to dubbings of recordings made in 1908 by Tetrazzini, in 1927 by Galli-Curci and in 1930 by Lily Pons. The inference is of course that Miss Peters is the legitimate heir in this royal line of coloraturas. This point may be open to question, but there is no question but that she has a most beautiful voice, and that she has been quite successful in some of the roles that

have been always associated with her famous predecessors.

(10) Unforgotten Stars. Lucrezia Bori, Enrico Caruso, Giuseppe de Luca, Amelita Galli-Curci, Beniamino Gigli, John McCormack, Rosa Ponselle, Tito Schipa, Lawrence Tibbett, John Charles Thomas. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1138) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Manon Lescaut*—Donna non vidi mai (Caruso); *Trovatore*—Ai nostri monti (Caruso & Schumann-Heink); *Semele*—O, Sleep! Why Dost Thou Leave Me (McCormack); *Barbiere di Siviglia*—Ecco ridente in cielo (Schipa); *Gioconda*—Enzo Grimaldo, Principe di Santaflor (Gigli & de Luca); *Traviata*—Un di felice (Galli-Curci & Schipa); *Traviata*—De' miei bollenti spiriti (McCormack); *Mignon*—Connais-tu le pays? (Bori); *Norma*—Casta Diva (Ponselle); *L'Arlesiana*—Romanza di Federico (Gigli); *Otello*—Credo in un dio crudel (Tibbett); *Barbiere di Siviglia*—Largo al factotum (Thomas); *Turandot*—Nessun dorma! (Gigli).

RCA Victor has selected revealing recordings by some of its outstanding artists from its precious files and placed them on the present LP disc. The earliest is McCormack's recording from *La Traviata* which dates from 1910 and the latest in the aria which Gigli sings from *Turandot* which was recorded in 1949. Examples of the art of great operatic singers covering a span of nearly forty years are to be found on this unusual record.

VOCAL



Britten: Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Op. 31. David Lloyd (tenor), James Stagliano (horn) and members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Richard Burgin. One side, and **Britten: Folk Songs of the British Isles.** David Lloyd (tenor), Marguerite Willauer (soprano) with Wolfgang Schanzer (piano). 1-12" disc (*BOSTON B-205) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *The Sally Gardens*; *Little Sir William*; *The Tree Grows So High*; *The Ash Grove*; *Come You Not from Newcastle*; *Sweet Polly Oliver*; *O Waly, Waly*; *Oliver Cromwell*.

Benjamin Britten's *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings* was written in 1943 for the English tenor, Peter Pears, and the horn player Denis Brain. It is obviously an occasional work, written to order as it were, and it shows, as such music so often does, a lack of inner compulsion. The texts for the work are chosen from poems by Charles Cotton, Tennyson, Blake, Ben Jonson, Keats and an anonymous 15th century poet. For this writer, the poetry is far and away better than the music, which is by way of being dry, unmelodic and, in the last analysis, comes very close to being mere note-stringing.

The performance, by the way, is only so-so. David Lloyd has a fair tenor voice but of a quality that does not impress this listener—the top notes are

forced and thin. His diction is also only fair—that is, when the going is smooth the words are understandable; but when things get tough, emphasis is on getting the tones produced—let's not worry about the words.

The obverse side is devoted to some folk songs of the British Isles as arranged by Benjamin Britten. Here again this reviewer is left cold—he just doesn't care for Britten's taste, apparently, for there is a London disc by Jenifer Vyvyan devoted to Songs of England that is nothing short of superb.

Boston's recording is good, but Boston does a very curious thing on the jacket. They print only a portion of the texts for the *Serenade* and nothing at all for the folk songs! This is absurd, for the words (aside from being the best part of the *Serenade*) are important to get even a slight understanding of what the piece is about. Better be very sure of yourself on this one; or play safe and hear it first. W.

Cole Porter Songs. Louise Carlyle and Bob Shaver (vocalists) accompanied by David Baker and John Morris (pianos). 1-12" disc (*WALDEN-301) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Get Out of Town*; *I've Got You on My Mind*; *Why Shouldn't I?*; *Rap Tap on Wood*; *Where Have You Been?*; *After You—Who?*; *I Love You*; *You Irritate Me So*; *In the Still of the Night*; *Ridin' High*.

Rodgers and Hart Songs. Louise Carlyle and Bob Shaver (vocalists) accompanied by the John Morris Trio. 1-12" disc (*WALDEN-304) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Did You Ever Get Stung?*; *A Tree in the Park*; *Nobody's Heart*; *Sentimental Me*; *To Keep My Love Alive*; *Wait Till You See Her*; *A Ship Without a Sail*; *Any Old Place with You*; *Easy to Remember*; *I've Got Five Dollars*.

If you would like to have a flock of some of the better show tunes of the last three decades sung in an interestingly sophisticated style with mighty clever accompaniments, this pair of LP discs is probably just what you are looking for. Louise Carlyle and Bob Shaver are "tops" in this field and David Baker and John Morris with the aid of two pianos and the John Morris Trio consisting of a piano or celeste, a guitar and double-bass, supply just the proper rhythm to make these outstanding renditions in the best supper club manner.

Suppé: Boccaccio (highlights). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus of the Vienna "Volksooper" and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Anton Paulik. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4818) \$5.95.

Boccaccio is one of Suppé's more popular light operas. It has appeared on the stages of Middle-Europe with reasonable regularity during the last seventy-five years. Although it is practically unknown to the present generation of American music lovers, there may be some who would be interested in this rollicking music. If so, they will find the present

recording excellent. Fine soloists have been secured, and they are well supported by a very good chorus and orchestra. The reproduction is highly satisfactory.

PIANO



Recital Favorites. Jorge Bolet (piano). 1-12" disc (*BOSTON B-301) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Etude in the Style of a Waltz* (Saint-Saëns); *In Autumn* (Moszkowski); *Hunting Song* (Mendelssohn); *Rondo Capriccioso* (Mendelssohn); *Funerailles* (Liszt); *Andante in F* (Beethoven).

Airs of Spain. Jorge Bolet (piano). 1-12" disc (*BOSTON B-300) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Prelude, Malagueña, Cordoba* (Albeniz); *Andaluza, Cubana* (Fallá); *Y la Negra Bailaba, Danze de los Nanigos* (Lecuona); *Playera* (Granados).

Jorge Bolet was born in Cuba and received his musical training at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. After graduation he won the Naumburg award which entitles the recipient to a Town Hall recital. World War II interrupted his musical career; he served first in the Cuban Army and then in the U.S. Army and is now an American citizen. Since his release from military service his real musical career has got under way. He has appeared with many important symphony orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra. He has made several very successful recital tours of Mexico, Central America, Canada and the United States. Today he is an established mature artist and one whose recordings should meet with the approval of discerning music lovers everywhere.

Mr. Bolet's first record contains a number of selections that have met with rare favor with his recital audiences. In several of these selections his "silken touch and luxuriously rippling technique" are much in evidence. On his second disc his Cuban background stands him in good stead and this Spanish music comes to us with fine traditional flavor.

We shall be looking forward to Mr. Bolet's future recordings, and we rather expect that they will give us something of a more substantial character; perhaps a little Mozart or Beethoven.

Britten: Diversions on a Theme for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 21. Siegfried Rapp (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **R. Strauss: Burleske in D minor.** Elly Ney (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*URLP-7101) \$5.95.

The score of Britten's *Diversions* carries this note by the composer: "I wrote this work in Maine in the summer of 1940 at the suggestion of Mr. Paul Wittgenstein. It takes the form of eleven straight-

forward and concise variations on a simple musical scheme, which is announced by the orchestra without any preamble . . . In no place in the work did I attempt to imitate a two-handed piano technic, but concentrated on exploiting and emphasizing the single-line approach . . ." The scheme is comprised of variations with such titles as *Recitative, Romance, March, Rubato, Chorale, Nocturne, Badinerie*, etc. The music is clever and the work of an obviously skilled craftsman; it is also interesting and pleasant listening for those who like things not too conventional. Siegfried Rapp offers what appears to be a fluent performance of this difficult work.

While the Britten work appears in its first recording, the Strauss *Burleske* is now heard in its third LP recording. The veteran artist, Elly Ney, tackles this Brahmsian forerunner of *Till Eulenspiegel*, a youthful effort of the then assistant to Hans von Bülow. Composed at twenty-one, in 1885, it was reluctantly offered for publication in 1894, for monetary reasons. It seems to be picking up a bit in popularity these days, probably because it is shorter than a concerto but of more substance than most works which are not full-blown concertos. It is certainly light listening and makes no pretense to profundity. If you enjoy it, this performance is good and the reproduction is also of fine quality. Once again, the question of couplings will be important, for the other two LP's of *Burleske* have couplings of works from the standard repertoire. In both works on this disc, Arthur Rother and the Radio Berlin Orchestra again prove dependable accompanists; and on both sides the reproduction is good.

S.

ORGAN



Reubke: Sonata in C minor for Organ on the 94th Psalm. One side, and **Liszt: Fantasia and Fugue on B-A-C-H.** And **Liszt: Organ Mass—Credo; Gloria.** E. Power Biggs, playing the old Boston Music Hall organ at the Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Methuen (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4820) \$5.95.

Lovers of fine organ music are deeply indebted to Columbia for making available the first in a series of records to be made using the Methuen organ. This old Walcker, built in 1857 and erected in the old Boston Music Hall, was later dismantled and put in storage. Later purchased by a wealthy resident of Methuen, Edward F. Searles, it was installed in a hall designed and built especially for this great instrument. Although the public had a chance to hear it after 1909, its location seemed to make it isolated, but the citizens of Methuen a few years ago had the hall and the instrument renovated, and the present Methuen Memorial Music Hall is being put to good use.

The organ itself is recognized as one of the greatest instruments ever built, and one hearing of this magnificent record will convey sufficient reason for you to

understand the high regard in which it is held. While records can never fully reproduce the effect of a pipe organ (because of its vast area of tone-producing elements), this present recording comes about as close as we are likely to come for some time in monaural discs. The dynamic range, the quality of tone, the depth and magnificence, and to a certain extent even the perspective from hall acoustics, all make this a superb example of organ recording. Nothing done previously exceeds it, and few equal it.

The instrument has obviously inspired E. Power Biggs to the finest performances he has yet produced on discs. The music is all large scale, and Biggs uses large, broad, and rich registration. The Reubke *Sonata*, masterpiece of romantic writing, is played splendidly, and this recording is preferable to the other LP of it, played by Catherine Crozier, good as hers may be. The Liszt numbers include the *Fantasia and Fugue on B-A-C-H*, another virtuoso display piece—not only for the organist, but in this case also for the organ. Everything about this disc is just about perfection, including the cover design, which shows the organ case, one of the finest ever built—this one of American Walnut and holding the largest pipes of the pedal 32' Open Principal. Those of us who have seen it will treasure this large, clear photo. Our highest rating for this disc. S.

Old English Masters. Flor Peeters, playing the organ of the Church of St. Jans, Gouda (Netherlands). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-578) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *The Bells* (Byrd); *Fantasia on a Flemish Folk Song*, *Vevilla Regis* (Bull); *Trio*, *Fantasia* (Philips); *Suite in C* (Purcell); *Voluntary* (Croft); *Introduction and Trumpet Tune* (Greene); *Suite in D* (Stanley).

One of the great names in the organ world today is Flor Peeters, the eminent Belgian organist. He has premiered new works and is also considered a specialist in antique organ music; he is a prolific composer and editor of music and, of course, a virtuoso performer. The present set is aptly titled, as a glance at the contents noted above will reveal. The birth dates of the composers range from 1543 (Byrd) to 1713 (Stanley). The interest of the music progresses in about that order, for the second side of this disc with music by Purcell, Croft, Greene and Stanley is less of a listening task than the examples of Byrd, Bull and Philips, heresy though that may be to some. A great lover of the organ and organ music, this reviewer cannot generate much enthusiasm over baroque music on baroque organs, and thinks this sort of thing has far more currency today than it is worth in our age. Therefore this disc is recommended to organists who are studying the old English masters and would like to hear them performed by a distinguished organist, or to admirers of the art of Flor Peeters. Others will soon find their minds wandering over the doings of the day, the designs of the wallpaper or what not, while

supposedly listening to the disc. For fanciers of organ recordings, we would also mention that this disc is no paragon of hi-fi organ recording, as it contains the sizzle which one tries to avoid in organ, or other instrumental, hi-fi discs. The range and fidelity are good, but the buzz is there to spoil it.

The organ of St. Jans was built in 1732-36 by Jean Moreau of Rotterdam, has fifty-four ranks, about four thousand pipes, was advanced for its period, and is today noted for its excellent baroque quality. We think it is one of the nicer sounding instruments among old (baroque) organs heard on records today. S.



VIOLONCELLO

Bach: Suite No. 1 in G for Violoncello Unaccompanied. One side, and **Bach: Suite No. 4 in E-flat for Violoncello Unaccompanied.** Janos Starker (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-582) \$5.95.

The distinguished Hungarian violoncellist, Janos Starker, who presently holds the first chair in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, has added two more of the Bach Suites for Violoncello Unaccompanied to his growing list of recordings. He recorded Nos. 3 and 6 (*PE-SPL-543) several months ago. His earlier record was very well received, and so we are sure that the present disc will be welcomed by those music lovers who are interested in music of this character.



DICTION

Wilde: The Importance of Being Earnest. Produced and Directed by Sir John Gielgud. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35040/1TP) \$9.90. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3504B) \$11.90.

John Worthing.....Sir John Gielgud
Algernon Moncrieff.....Roland Culber
Lady Bracknell.....Dame Edith Evans
Hon. Gwendolen Fairfax.....Pamela Brown
Cecily Cardew.....Celia Johnson
Miss Prism.....Jean Cadell

We cannot imagine a finer cast than has been selected for this superb recording of Oscar Wilde's masterpiece. *The Importance of Being Earnest* is well known on both sides of the Atlantic; revivals of it by professional companies have been quite frequent since it first appeared on the London stage in 1895 and literally thousands of amateur performances have been given wherever the English language is spoken.

Wilde's comedy of manners, although it is in and of the nineties of fashionable England, seems not to be dated. Its charm and wit seem to be universal. Audiences of today respond to its sparkling dialogue just as audiences have for the last fifty some years. It is a permanent item in the repertory of the English speaking theatre, and as such it will doubtless remain. Thus, it is good to have such a splendid performance available in recorded form.

The Drunkard. Cast under the direction of Bill Forrest. 1-12" disc (*AUDIO-DRAMA 3075) \$5.95.

What next? Here is a recording of the famous old melodrama *The Drunkard*, which was first produced by P. T. Barnum in 1854 and has been off and on the boards with reasonable regularity ever since. A production of it has been playing steadily in Los Angeles for the last twenty-five years. Here we have a recorded performance of this old turkey with all the fixings—musical themes for the various characters played on the "pianer," and the introduction of appropriate topical songs such as: *Down with Demon Rum; Tavern in the Town; No, No, a Thousand Times No*; etc., etc. All one needs to enjoy this recording is a bag of roasted peanuts and someone with a gruff voice to pound on the floor with a cane and shout, "Hats off!" just before it begins.

The Power of Positive Thinking. Narrated by the Rev. Norman Vincent Peale. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1794) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Believe in Yourself; How You Look at It; Peace of Mind; Try Prayer Power; Expect the Best and Get It; How to Break the Worry Habit; How to Solve Your Problems; How to Relax.*

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, pastor, author, lecturer and columnist is probably the best known and most widely read Protestant minister in America. His *The Power of Positive Thinking* was one of the best selling books of 1953, has gone into many editions and is still in lively demand. For this unusual LP disc Dr. Peale has selected excerpts from the principal subject matter in this popular volume. Admirers of this great thinker and writer, and they are numbered in the hundreds of thousands, will doubtless be glad to hear Dr. Peale personally present some of the cardinal points of his philosophy as he does so clearly on the present record.

MISCELLANEOUS

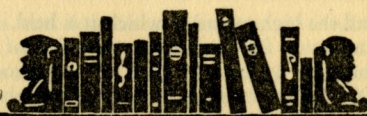


Drums of the Yoruba of Nigeria. Recorded on location by William Bascom. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-441) \$6.45.

Tribal Music of Australia. Recorded on location by A. P. Elkin. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-439) \$6.45.

Burmese Folk and Traditional Music. Recorded in Burma. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-436) \$6.45.

Here are some interesting and valuable additions to the famous Ethnic Folkways Library. As in the past all of these recordings are authentic and have been made by native artists in the countries of their origin.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoterie, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

READERS of THE NEW RECORDS are well aware that phonograph records offer a marvelous method of learning foreign languages, for from time to time we have called attention to several very fine courses available for this purpose. We have just discovered a wonderfully simple course for learning French (and other languages listed below) entitled "French Without Toil," otherwise known as the Assimil (pronounced "Ah'-suh-meel") method. This course is available either on 78 rpm or LP ($33\frac{1}{3}$ rpm); it consists either of 20-10" 78 rpm discs or 5-10" LP discs, plus one bound book of 504 pp., and it is priced at \$55.50.

There are several things about Assimil which make it simple and easy, yet a most thorough course. First, the lessons are short (the first lesson has only ten short sentences in it). Several speakers present each lesson, so the student becomes accustomed to conversation at once; the speakers speak to each other, so that the student is not "spoken at," but rather feels he is observing others speak. The sentences in each lesson are correlated: for example, the first lesson is conversation which might take place prior to making a trip to Paris; the second is about catching a taxi; the third, taking an elevator; and so on. Every seventh lesson is a "book" lesson, reviewing and amplifying the previous six lessons; we mention this because the casual observer, examining the records, would notice that apparently every seventh lesson is missing.

One hundred forty lessons comprise the course. There is NO formal vocabulary with the course, and we must commend Assimil for this. Each lesson is translated in the text book, and it should be realized that the student will learn a language best by *thinking* in that language—not by translating each word into Eng-

lish. One could know the meaning of a thousand French words and yet not be able to speak French; but by playing these short lessons over and over again, the student will speak French—and he will know what he is saying in French. When a child learns to speak, he doesn't translate; he associates words with objects, actions and situations; he doesn't need to know a single rule of grammar to speak, he need only repeat what he hears. This is the Assimil principle, and the student will find that he will soon speak the language he is studying; he will find, once he accustoms himself to the procedure, that it is really almost effortless—really fun to learn.

Assimil offers the following language courses: French, German, Russian, Spanish and Italian. All are \$55.50 each; the Russian comes on 78 rpm only, while the others are on either 78 or LP. Additional textbooks, in case more than one student plans using the same set of records, are available at \$2.50 each. Most dealers offer divided payment plans on language courses for those who choose to pay out of income.

If your local dealer does not stock Assimil sets, inquiries or orders may be addressed to the publishers of this bulletin; the prices include postage to any point in U. S. A.

* * *

Just before going to press a most unique record arrived at the studio. It is entitled "MusQuiz," 1-12" LP Disc. Price \$5.95. Just as one might infer from its title, this disc is a most ingenious musical quiz, containing snatches of 100 familiar musical works. With each record comes scoring sheets for six players; the idea is, of course, to identify correctly as many of the pieces as you can.

The music is divided by category, there

being 12 overtures, 12 symphonies, 16 concertos, 10 descriptive pieces, 5 ballet excerpts, 13 selections of "music of many nations," 10 "encores," 16 "sounds of instruments" where players are to identify instruments rather than selections, and 6 miscellaneous excerpts. The disc is banded, so that if time does not permit playing a whole game, players may select the categories in which they prefer to be tested. Instructions are given for playing a solitaire game; if more than six players desire to play, additional scoring sheets may be ordered.

We've had lots of fun with our copy, and recommend it for a diverting evening for music lovers. If your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-one years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning April 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Palestrina: *Missa "Iste Confessor."* One side, and Palestrina: *Missa sine nomine.* The Welch Chorale. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-49) \$5.95. (TNR Aug. '51).

Victoria: *Missa "O Magnum Mysterium."* One side, and Victoria: *Missa "O quam Gloriosum."* The Welch Chorale. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-46) \$5.95. (TNR Apr. '52).

Schumann: *Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42.* One side, and Schumann: *Dichterliebe, Op. 48.* Lotte Lehmann (soprano) accompanied by Bruno Walter (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4788) \$5.95. (TNR July '43 & Feb. '42).

Handel: (6) *Sonatas for Violin and Figured Bass.* Alexander Schneider (violin) and Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord) with Frank Miller (violin-cello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4787) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '50).

Operatic Recital. Ljuba Welitch (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4795) \$5.95. (TNR June '49 & Nov. '50).

CONTENTS: *Salome*—Final Scene; *Eugen Onegin*—Tatiana's Letter Scene; *Tosca*—Love Duet; *Tosca*—Vissi d'arte; *Die Fledermaus*—Czardas; *Der Zigeunerbaron*—Habet acht.

The Mormon Tabernacle Choir (Vols. I & II). Mormon Tabernacle Choir directed by J. Spencer Cornwall. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4789) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '49 & May '50).

Chopin: *Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35.* One side, and Chopin: (4) *Ballades.* Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4798) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '47 & Nov. '50).

ORCHESTRA



Stravinsky: *Pulcinella* (ballet with song). Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky, with Mary Simmons (soprano), Glenn Schnittke (tenor) and Phillip MacGregor (bass). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4830) \$5.95.

Copland: *Billy the Kid* (ballet suite). One side, and Schuman: *Undertow* (ballet suite). Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8238) \$5.70.

Being one of the tribe who likes Stravinsky's "big three" and little else of his output, we were more than pleasantly surprised and, indeed, quite delighted to find a work by him that proved thoroughly enjoyable, and one which we can heartily recommend to anyone who has the musical appreciation to have read this far in this publication. There are mitigating circumstances which make this a palatable dish, mainly because the music is derived from Pergolesi. The entire work uses Pergolesi's music as a source for all themes, and the general style of the Eighteenth Century is threaded through the score. But the genius of Stravinsky must be acknowledged in equal measure, for he has done a work of incredible musicianship in welding Pergolesi's music and Stravinsky's style and harmonic devices into music that is entirely pleasing and captivating on first hearing. The complete work, presented on this disc, has some vocal parts acceptably sung, but not dominating the work—they are short incidental things. The performance is superb, with the orchestra playing just about perfectly, and the reproduction mirroring this with a clarity and fidelity that would be hard to better.

Another splendid performance is the Ballet Theatre Orchestra's rendition, under Joseph Levine, of William Schuman's *Undertow*. Ballet music played by the Ballet Theatre Orchestra results in performances that are built on understanding of the score from many repeated performances. The orchestra is a good one, and conductor Levine is an expert. Copland's *Billy the Kid*, unfortunately, lacks perfection

in playing in a few spots which many may not notice; but the over-all impression is that this is a vital performance, with Levine in complete command and having sympathy for the music at hand. It is one of Copland's most colorful scores, full of action and interest; the suite drawn from the ballet is interesting as music alone, and hangs together well. The choreographic episodes for orchestra which comprise the *Undertow* suite also result in a composite piece of music that holds the interest. We would give this well recorded disc a high rating among ballet records. S.

R. Strauss: Don Quixote. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch, with Gregor Piatigorsky (violin), Richard Burgin (violin) and Joseph de Pasquale (viola). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1781) \$5.72.

R. Strauss: Symphony for Wind Instruments in E-flat, Op. Posth. MGM Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. 1-12" disc (*MGME-3097) \$4.85.

Hard on the heels of the recent London issue of *Don Quixote* by Fournier and Krauss (*L-LL-855) comes this new one by Piatigorsky, a man long associated with good performances of the work. With the imaginative conductor Charles Münch and the virtuoso Boston Orchestra, this all adds up to a most impressive reading of the "Fantastic Variations on a Knightly Theme." Both London and Victor have supplied reproduction devised with the best of their present day techniques. We find it difficult to name a choice between these two versions, but think maybe Victor has it by a narrow margin, mainly because of Münch and the Bostonians' imaginative playing.

Strauss' first venture into wind instrument compositions began when he was sixteen, and the instrumental combination attracted him several other times during his life. The present work was completed in June of 1945, first played in this country in 1953. Strauss called this work a "sonatina" and why his editors took the liberty of calling it a symphony would make for a lively argument. We cannot see any reason for arbitrarily calling the work a symphony—a master like Strauss certainly would not think of the work as being of symphonic proportions. Be that as it may, the work has a limited appeal for most music lovers; those who are woodwind performers will find the work highly interesting. American-born and American-trained Izler Solomon has established himself as a champion of new music, particularly modern American music. On this disc he directs what is probably a fine performance of the Strauss work, although we have no method of evaluating it, except that it sounds crisp and lively. For those who wish to know the instrumentation of the sonatina, it is: four horns; two flutes; two oboes; two bassoons; contrabassoon; and five clarinets, one in C, two in E-flat, corno di bassetto and bass clarinet. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 72. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-867) \$5.95.

Brahms' *Symphony No. 2 in D* is about seventy-seven years old and, in its lifetime, has established itself as a popular favorite and also as something of a war-horse. It is this latter aspect that has so often mitigated against the critical acceptance of so many performances, recorded or otherwise.

There are, as of March 1954, twelve LP discs devoted to the work. In the old 78 rpm days there were fifteen recordings. Of all the records this writer has heard (some ten or eleven versions) there was only one performance on 78's that was outstanding—Sir Thomas Beecham's made in 1936, while of the eleven LP's previously issued none struck him as completely satisfactory. With the release of Carl Schuricht's beautifully moulded performance on London, however, the match for Beecham's magnificent reading has been found.

One of the outstanding features of this disc is the superb playing of the justly renowned Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. In so many recorded performances the symphony is used as a show case for virtuoso conductors to display their wares. But here Carl Schuricht achieves a degree of self-effacement that enables the listener to hear the music with virtually no obtrusive personality between himself and the composer. Each movement unfolds in a glorious manner, tempi are just and the work has obviously been conceived as a whole rather than as a series of disjointed episodes, as is so often the case.

Doubtless each of the other versions of this well-loved symphony, notably those of Monteux, Toscanini and Karajan, will have its adherents; but even the owners of any of these recordings are urged to hear this straightforward reading—there will be surprises. In addition, the London sound is very fine indeed, particularly in the brass passages, although one must also admire the beautiful string tone for which the Vienna organization is famous. W.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4828) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21. One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4790) \$5.95. (TNR Jan '49 & May '50).

It would be hard to welcome yet another version of the "Pastoral" were it not that such music is made to order for a conductor of Beecham's talents. The "Pastoral" is a study in delicate shadings and lovely woodwind phrasings and such musical matters, all of which is a natural specialty of Sir Thomas. There is little point in denying the excellence of several other LP's of this work, but Beecham's effort

is typical of his interpretive genius and conductorial skill. It is as honest a statement of the spirit (as well as the letter) of the music as one could imagine, and with all of that it is a beautifully played performance by the orchestra. One is reminded of Sir Thomas' taste and perception when hearing his version of the celebrated thunderstorm in the fourth movement. His reading keeps this strictly a short, local, temporary thunderstorm, such as most of us have experienced every summer of our lives—and not a raging typhoon or hurricane or other such violent eruption as many conductors pride themselves in depicting in the middle of this serene work. Recorded in December 1951 in London, the reproduction is pleasing, rather close and chamber-like and appropriate to the type of music. We think this is a beautiful "Pastoral" and recommend it to those who like the music for what it is and not for what an energetic conductor can make out of it.

The Beethoven *First* and *Fifth* are part of the complete series recorded for Columbia by Bruno Walter. The *First* originally appeared on a 10" disc and the *Fifth* on both sides of a 12" disc! They have now been coupled on a single 12" disc, one side each, with no band separations between movements of the *Fifth*. There is certainly good value here, and the many admirers of Bruno Walter (who have not already acquired these on singles) will find this mighty attractive. The greatest living exponent of the so-called Viennese style of conducting, Walter, offers superb readings in this style, which is indeed kind to the intentions of the composer. Those who want Beethoven more tightly drawn and explosive will find such recordings elsewhere in the LP lists. S.

Handel: Concerto Grosso No. 11 in A, Op. 6, No. 11.

One side, and Handel: *Concerto Grosso No. 12 in B minor, Op. 6, No. 12.* Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-10" disc (*L-LL-870) \$4.95.

At long last London has issued the final disc in the series completing the twelve Handel *Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6, by Boyd Neel (see TNR Dec. '50 & Aug. '52). As the present disc is well up to the standard of the earlier ones in this series, we are merely listing it for our readers' information.

Mozart: Divertimento in D, K. 334. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska, with Jan Tomasow (violin). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-441) \$5.95.

Mozart: Serenade in B-flat for 13 Wind Instruments, K. 361. Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5229) \$5.95.

We rather feel that the present recording of *Divertimento in D, K. 334* is the best of the three listed in the current issue of Schwann's LP catalog. . . . As to the *Serenade in B-flat, K. 361*, we think that it is pretty much a toss-up as to which of the four versions available one should choose.

Songs for Strings. Members of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Richard Jones. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-419) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Yesterdays; Orchids in the Moonlight; Bambalina; Long Ago and Far Away; Summer-time; Love Walked In; Little Girl Blue; Dancing on the Ceiling.*

Music to Relax By. Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4008) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Polka Grotesque; The Enchanted Ballroom; Fountains in a Shaded Square; Intermezzo and Serenade; Danse de la Poupée; Pulcinella; Nocturne in Silver; Valse Légère; Lonely Shepherd; Blues and Fox Trot.*

Music of Brahms and Tchaikovsky. Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4009) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Hungarian Dances Nos. 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 17 (Brahms). Barcarolle; Nutcracker Suite—3 selections; Melodie; Danse Russe; None but the Lonely Heart (Tchaikovsky).*

Music of George Gershwin. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4819) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Someone to Watch over Me; Mine; Oh, Lady Be Good; I Got Rhythm; Strike Up the Band; Soon; Bess, O Where's My Bess; Embraceable You; Maybe; The Man I Love; Fascinating Rhythm; 'S Wonderful.*

Four LP discs containing music in the lighter mood—none is outstanding, just average recordings. If some of these tunes appeal to you, and you want some music that is easy to take, you'll find the performances all right and the reproduction quite satisfactory.

Holst: The Planets, Op. 32. London Philharmonic Choir and Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5235) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

CONCERTO



Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15. Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4829) \$5.95.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. Gerhard Manke (violin) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Hermann Abendroth. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-24) \$3.50.

A few months ago a recording of the Brahms *Concerto No. 1* found favor in these columns in a performance by Curzon and Beinun (*L-LL-850). This is indeed a fine reading and the choice is now presented of selecting between two good readings, for the present disc by Serkin is a magnificent ex-

position of the music. The music is not easy to assimilate; its appeal is rather veiled and has kept this work from the "favorites" list of many folks. We were continually of the opinion, as we heard this recording, that Serkin and Szell got under the surface of the music more than we had ever before heard it done. There is a notable kinship of musical feeling between Serkin and Szell that produces a highly charged, tightly knit, and urgent reading most befitting the work at hand. We believe most critics and students of this concerto will find that Serkin and Szell have achieved the best reading of the work yet to be committed to discs. We can offer nothing but praise for their effort, and for Columbia's splendid reproduction. In passing, we would mention that the performance appealed to us more than Serkin's previous recording with Reiner.

Columbia's new annotator, Charles Burr, is supplying fine program notes for the jacket covers. He quotes from Brahms' biographer Niemann: "... the intrinsic evidence of Brahms' concerto style is in the first place, the suppression of all display of technical virtuosity by the soloist as an end in itself; next, the equal footing maintained by the soloist and orchestra, . . . and, lastly, the approximation of the concerto to the symphony in intellectual content." We wonder whether this lack of surface display and prettiness has kept such a work as the Brahms *First Concerto* from being more widely appreciated and accepted.

The Brahms *Violin Concerto* listed above could hardly be recommended to anyone. If you are after a budget-priced LP of it, get Ida Haendel (*V-LBC-1051) for less than this one; if you want a big name artist at the usual price, five of today's top fiddlers have it on LP. This one made us nervous wondering whether the artist would get through some of the technically tricky passages. S.

Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. One side, and Bruch: *Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26.* Nathan Milstein (violin) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8243) \$5.70.

Now that Milstein has joined the Capitol roster of artists, we presume he will do most of the standard concerto repertoire for them. The present disc has two works which he made for Columbia some years back (and which, at this writing, are still in its catalog). Recognized as one of the great violinists of our day, Milstein is rarely erratic, and can usually be depended upon for a generally straight reading, played with a smooth and sweet tone of fair power. In both the works here recorded he is technically accurate and tonally pure, with an interpretation built along conventional and accepted lines. His collaborator, William Steinberg, is a performer of much the same qualities, and the accompaniments he provides are virtually perfect—the Pittsburgh Orchestra plays beautifully. Capitol's "Full Dimensional Sound" has its characteristic rich bloom, and a little "space"

has been allowed between the solo violin and the listener, so that you do not feel like backing up a few feet. The balance between soloist and orchestra is admirable. The surfaces of our disc were exceptionally quiet.

Competitive versions offer much choice in the way of artists and also in couplings. Heifetz has made both these works, although they are each coupled with another violin piece; Stern, Menuhin, and Elman have well-considered readings of the Mendelssohn and Francescatti, Campoli, and Menuhin are heard to advantage in the Bruch. Considering the ideal coupling and the fine performances with modern reproduction, we would say the present Milstein disc is the best buy unless you wish to try other discs for artist preference and the like. Capitol is to be congratulated not only on the artistic excellence of this disc, but also for offering such a good coupling in this "all-American" product, of which there are too few by American record companies, excepting the two major ones. S.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. David Oistrakh (violin) with the State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6018) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto in C, Op. 56 ("Triple"). David Oistrakh (violin), Knusevitsky (violoncello) and Oborin (piano) with orchestra conducted by Golovanov. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 219.** David Oistrakh (violin) with orchestra conducted by Golovanov. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-590) \$5.95.

Tartini: Sonata in G minor ("Devil's Trill"). David Oistrakh (violin) and V. Yampolski (piano). And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring").** And **Schubert: Sonata No. 5 in A, Op. 162 ("Duo").** David Oistrakh (violin) and Lev Oborin (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-573) \$5.95.

David Oistrakh is one of the current Soviet products which nearly everyone is willing to accept, for he is truly a great artist and one of the great violinists of today. His records have enjoyed a brisk sale, and connoisseurs of violin records are always anxious to hear his latest. With this batch of three, there appears some duplication, as is the case with the Soviet tapes—several companies issue them. Which is which and whether or not they are identical recordings we have not had time to find out. But one thing is apparent, they are of varying quality. The Vanguard record has some blasting and rather unpleasant sounds in loud passages, as though the recording were not too good to begin with, but the transfer was hopped up to try to get it in the hi-fi class. Oistrakh's performance of the Brahms concerto is along broad lines, with the maximum of tone being extracted from the fiddle. In this, as in all these Oistrakh performances, his technique is terrific. We would not name this as the best LP of the Brahms concerto among those available.

The Beethoven "Triple" Concerto features repro-

duction on the dull side, not bad, but not of present day quality. If Columbia's 10" disc were on one side of a 12" disc, the reading by Corigliano, Rose, Hendl and the New York Philharmonic under Walter would be at least an even match for the present disc. The other LP of this work is the re-issue, conducted by Weingartner. The Mozart concerto, coupled with the Beethoven, is a brighter reproduction which violin fanciers will want to compare with the Heifetz and Morini recordings.

The disc with the three sonatas presents less of a recording problem, and the violin and piano combination are reproduced satisfactorily. By breaking the Beethoven sonata after the second movement and putting it on two sides, the admirers of Oistrakh get a good value with three major works on one disc. Again in this disc, as in the others above, those who are not particularly Oistrakh fanciers will do well to compare other LP recordings of these works. S.

Liszt: Concerto No. 1 in E-flat ("Triangle"). One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 2 in G minor.** Emil Gilels (piano) with the State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6015) \$5.95.

Emil Gilels is a name entirely new to us, so we will quote from the informative jacket notes: "Emil Gilels is new to United States music lovers, but has won a fabulous reputation throughout Europe. Born in Russia, he became a young prodigy, winning international piano contests in Vienna and Brussels, and today is a 'professor,' with numerous young and brilliant progeny. A student of the entire literature of the piano, he has given the first performance of many of Prokofiev's works in the Soviet Union, and also has recaptured the 'grand manner' of nineteenth century pianism, with not only a herculean technical prowess but what may be called a grasp of the romantic 'poetry' of the music in a way granted to few pianists of our time. And so there is perhaps no better way to introduce this truly great pianist to American audiences than through two of these 'warhorses,' battle-scarred veterans on which many a great pianist has ridden to fame."

These encomiums would not seem to be too exaggerated as one listens to this record of Gilels playing the "warhorses." His technique is truly fabulous and while he is capable of speed, he does not seem to place it paramount. Thus, he opens the Liszt *Triangle Concerto* more leisurely than some of his disc competitors, but when the fireworks go off in the latter part of the work, the effect is doubly thrilling. The Saint-Saëns concerto, while loaded with virtuoso display passages, also has many quiet, lyrical moments, and in both instances, Gilels is masterly. His recording is the best of the LP's of this work, although a fine reading and good reproduction is available on a 10" London (*LS-408) by Moura Lympny. The reproduction of the Gilels disc is acceptable but not outstanding. The recording for Gilels' Liszt concerto seems brighter and clearer; it is,

in fact, quite good. There are many LP's and many good ones, of this popular Liszt work, and a comparison is not only difficult, but in a way unnecessary. Those who want to hear Gilels as a great new keyboard artist will find his performance of the work worth owning. The orchestral accompaniments to both concertos are extremely well done. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Tchaikovsky: Quartet No. 3 in E-flat minor, Op. 30. Richard Burgin, Leo Panasevich (violins); Jos. de Pasquale (viola); and Samuel Mayes (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*BOSTON B-206) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Quartet No. 1 in D, Op. 11. Beethoven String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CSM-CRLP-119) \$5.45.

Of particular interest is the first recording that we know of Tchaikovsky's *Quartet No. 3 in E-flat minor, Op. 30*, a work that is practically unknown in this country. While it is an uneven work, it is not without interest; and much of it is very beautiful to listen to. A fine group of artists have made the present recording. All of them are members of the Boston Symphony. Richard Burgin is first violinist and associate conductor; Joseph De Pasquale is viola soloist and Samuel Mayes is violoncello soloist; Leo Panasevich is a member of the first violin section.

The Beethoven String Quartet that has recorded the ever-popular *Quartet No. 1* with its famous *Andante Cantabile* is one of the leading chamber music groups of the Soviet Union. It is a highly skilled group, but in the present recording suffers from mediocre reproduction.

Françaix: Serenade on B-E-A ("Jeu musical sur trois notes"). Pasquier Sextet conducted by Jean Françaix. One side, and **Poulenc: Le Bal Masqué** ("Cantate profane pour baryton et orchestre de chambre"). Warren Galjour (baritone) with chamber orchestra conducted by Edvard Fendler (TNR Nov. '50). 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-518) \$5.95.

Françaix was commissioned to write a serenade to a beautiful lady by the name of Beatrice, thus we have the *Serenade on B-E-A*. The composer did not know at the time that the Beatrice was the very gifted Hungarian dancer, Beatrice Goll. The work is not without interest, but to us it seemed to go a long way around the barn before it seemed to get anywhere. We admit that we had only time to listen to it once; perhaps it requires more attention. . . . This recording of Poulenc's *Le Bal Masqué* was issued as a 10-inch LP disc several years ago (see TNR November 1950). Max de Schauensee gave it a rather encouraging review at that time, but we don't recall that it was greeted with much enthusiasm by American music lovers. To tell the truth we had quite forgotten it.

Boccherini: Quartet in A, Op. 39, No. 3. One side, and **Boccherini: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 58, No. 3.** Quartetto Italiano: Paolo Borciani, Elisa Pegreffi (violin); Piero Farulli (viola); and Franco Rossi (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35062TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35062) \$5.95.

Boccherini: Quartet in D, Op. 6, No. 1. One side, and **de Giardini: Sonata a Tre in E-flat** and **Puccini: Crisantemi.** Quartetto della Scala: Enrico Minetti, Giuseppe Gambetti (violins); Tommaso Valdinoci (viola); and Gilberto Crepax (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7074) \$5.95.

Locatelli: Sonata in D. One side, and **Frescobaldi: Toccata and Boccherini: Sonata in A.** Antonio Janigro (violoncello) and Eugenio Bagnoli (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5243) \$5.95.

Respighi: Doric String Quartet. One side, and **Malipiero: Quartet No. 7** and **Pick-Mangiagalli: (3) Fugues for Quartet.** Quartetto della Scala. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7075) \$5.95.

The four LP discs listed above cover four centuries of Italian chamber music beginning with Frescobaldi, who was born in 1583, to one of the most important present day composers of Italy, Francesco Malipiero. Throughout all of these years beautiful melodies abound in the works of these various composers, and thus the compositions of all of them may be easily enjoyed. There is a wealth of musical pleasure in these four records. Reproduction and performances are well up to standard.

Mozart: Ein musikalischer Spass, K. 522 ("A Musical Joke"). Chamber Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Matthieu Lange. One side, and **Mehul: Symphony No. 1 in G minor.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Rolf Kleinert. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7109) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quintet in E-flat, K. 407. One side, and **Rust: Sonata in C for Viola.** Soloists of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*BOSTON B-201) \$5.95.

Mozart: Trio No. 1 in G, K. 496. One side, and **Mozart: Trio No. 2 in B-flat, K. 502.** Jean Fournier (violin), Antonio Janigro (violoncello) and Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5242) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quintet in E-flat, K. 452. One side, and **Beethoven: Quintet in E-flat, Op. 16.** Rudolf Serkin with members of the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4834) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quintet in E-flat, K. 452. Robert Veyron-Lacroix with soloists of the French Wind Quintet. One side, and **Mozart: Cassation for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon.** Soloists of the French Wind Quintet. 1-12" disc (*OL-50016) \$5.95.

Hidden in this batch of Mozart chamber music

recordings may be found two items that may be of especial interest to musicologists. The first is a *Symphony No. 1 in G minor* in four short movements by the French dramatic composer, Etienne Henri Méhul (1763-1817). This is a charming little orchestral work that will certainly be new to most music lovers . . . The second is an intriguing bit of chamber music by the long neglected German composer, a student of Emanuel and Friedemann Bach, Friedrich Wilhelm Rust (1739-1796). His *Sonata in C Major* is scored for solo viola, violoncello and two horns. It is unique in its field and should be of more than passing interest to discerning students.

Rubbra: Quartet No. 2 in E-flat. Griller String Quartet. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-657) \$4.95.

We found this recent work by the modern English composer, Edmund Rubbra, of more than passing interest. It was commissioned by the Quartet that has recorded it and was first performed publicly in 1952. We had time to play it through only once, but we have laid aside the review copy for further consideration when the opportunity comes. We are sure that it rates more attention than we have been able to give it, for parts of it are very beautiful indeed and all of it is interesting.

Brahms: Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1. Budapest String Quartet. One side, and **Dvorák: Quintet No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 97.** Budapest String Quartet with Milton Katims (viola). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4799) \$5.95.

Brahms: Trio No. 1 in B, Op. 8. Trio di Trieste. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-955) \$5.95.

Brahms: Quintet in B minor, Op. 115. Alfred Boskovsky (clarinet); Willi Boskovsky, Philipp Matheis (violins); Günther Breitenbach (viola); Nikolaus Hübner (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-858) \$5.95.

Brahms: Sonata in F, Op. 120, No. 1. One side, and **Brahms: Sonata in E-flat, Op. 120, No. 2.** Leopold Wlach (clarinet) and Joerg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5236) \$5.95.

Brahms: Trio No. 1 in B, Op. 8. Paul Badura-Skoda (piano); Jean Fournier (violin); and Antonio Janigro (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5237) \$5.95.

Brahms: Sonata No. 1 in E minor, Op. 38. One side, and **Brahms: Sonata in F, Op. 99.** George Koutzen (violoncello) and Harriet Wingreen (piano). 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-1031) \$5.95.

Brahms: Sonata No. 1 in E minor, Op. 38. One side, and **Brahms: Sonata No. 2 in F, Op. 99.** Janos Starker (violoncello) and Abba Bogin (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-593) \$5.95.

We are always hoping that the time will come when we can take each chamber music disc as it comes along and give it individual attention, but

that time is certainly not at hand. The best that we can do at present is to group them in some appropriate way such as we have the seven LP discs listed above—they all contain music by Brahms. Those interested in that composer's chamber music will find the recent recordings in that category all together and know that they are presently available.

Bloch: Quartet No. 2 (1945). Musical Arts Quartet. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-437) \$5.95.

It is good to have a recording of perhaps the finest string quartet to be written in the present century. It is doubly good when we have such an excellent performance as the Musical Arts Quartet gives us on the present disc.

Tartini: Sonata in G minor ("Devil's Trill"). David Oistrakh (violin) and V. Yampolski (piano). And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring").** And **Schubert: Sonata No. 5 in A, Op. 162 ("Duo").** David Oistrakh (violin) and Lev Oborin (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-573) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

OPERA



Falla: El Retablo de Maese Pedro ("Master Peter's Puppet Show"). Blanca Maria Seoane (soprano), Francisco Navarro (tenor); Chano Gonzalo (bass); Orchestre du Theatre des Champs-Elysees conducted by Ernesto Halfter. One side, and Falla: **El Amor Brujo.** Ines de Rivadeneira (contralto) with Madrid Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pedro de Freitas Branco. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5238) \$5.95.

Falla: El Retablo de Maese Pedro ("Master Peter's Puppet Show") (complete). (Sung in Spanish). Ilona Steingruber (soprano), Waldemar Kmentt (tenor) and Otto Wiener (bass) with chorus and Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*SPA-43) \$5.95.

Spanish music is not, by and large, too widely heard in this country, nor is there even a proportionate amount listed in the Schwann catalog. Suddenly, however, Manuel de Falla, best known in this country for *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, *The Three Cornered Hat* and *El Amor Brujo* is represented by two recordings of the puppet opera *El Retablo del Maese Pedro* (*Master Peter's Puppet Show*). It has always struck this reviewer as extremely odd that a work so esoteric as this and never recorded before should suddenly be issued by two companies—but such is the case.

El Retablo del Maese Pedro was first written for the wealthy and eccentric Princess de Polignac, who maintained a private marionette theatre on her estate outside Paris. Falla was commissioned to write the work, and its first private performance was in June 1923. Later, a public performance was given in

Bristol in October of the following year. The piece is a colorful one and loses little by being separated from its action.

The Westminster recording takes precedence over the SPA disc on several counts. To begin with, Westminster has been able, by means of the variable pitch technique, to get the whole of the little opera on one side, while the SPA requires two. In addition, Westminster makes use of Latin artists and Spanish soloists who have much more feeling for the idiom than do their Viennese confreres, excellent though the latter are. Finally Westminster has supplied a readable (literally) libretto; SPA's is a fine print, light colored job (probably run off on a duplicating machine) that is difficult to read.

In addition to the above, the obverse side of the Westminster disc is devoted to the fourth recording of *El Amor Brujo* and the best this colorful music has had. Featured is Ines de Rivadeneira a dark voiced contralto, more than slightly reminiscent of Sophie Braslau. Her voice is eminently suited to the music and she sings with great verve and expression. The Madrid Orchestra under Maestro Branco plays well and the recording is fine throughout. W.

Strauss: Salome (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-126) \$11.90.

Salome.....Walburga Wegner (s)
Herodias.....Georgine von Milinkovic (ms)
Herod.....Laszlo Szemere (t)
John the Baptist.....Josef Metternich (bt)
Narraboth.....Waldemar Kmentt (t)

With this second complete recording of Strauss' *Salome* the first question that arises is how does it compare with the previously (TNR Feb. '51) issued Oceanic set? The answer is, "very favorably." Actually there is little to choose between the two although, if memory serves correctly, the present set has slightly better sound.

The *Salome* of Walburga Wagner is less exciting than Christl Goltz's, but she sounds a little more like the young princess because of her more youthful voice. Jokanaan, as sung by Josef Metternich is very convincing but he is not the vocal equal of Josef Hermann who sings the role in the other set. Waldemar Kmentt is an excellent Narraboth while Georgine von Milinkovic and Laszlo Szemere sing the precious pair, Herodias and Herod, in an eminently satisfactory fashion.

Rudolf Moralt guides his forces through the complete score with a sure hand and a musical ear. The performance, then, is a good one and may be recommended. Owners of the earlier set, on the other hand, need have no qualms concerning their purchase for it, too, is an excellent job.

Columbia supplies a German-English libretto but otherwise the package is innocent of notes—a fact which is deplored, for the inclusion of additional information would add considerably to the pur-

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
Ⓢ indicates 45 rpm.

chaser's enjoyment. And the way to build a larger record market is to have more informed listeners.

W.

Rossini: Cambiale del Matrimonio (complete). (Sung in Italian). Angelica Tuccari, Grazia Ciferi (sopranos); Giuseppe Gentile (tenor); Nestore Catalani (baritone); Giorgio Onesti, Tito Colciotti (bassos); Chorus and Orchestra of Societa del Quartetto (Rome) conducted by Giuseppe Morelli. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-583) \$5.95.

La Cambiale del Matrimonio (the title may be variously translated as *The Bill of Marriage* or *Marriage by Promissory Note*—the jacket gives a third version *The Marriage Exchange*; the second translation gives the best idea of the story) is the first opera Rossini ever wrote, and he did this while he was in his nineteenth year! This fact alone makes the work of great interest, but on hearing the sparkling score with its lovely melodies, trios and other ensemble numbers one's interest turns to amazement.

To be sure, it is only a "festival" opera, designed to be sung during a carnival season and then forgotten, but it makes very fine listening one hundred and forty years after its first production at Venice. The plot, while impossible, is not unfunny, and Rossini's obvious interest in it and the youthful exuberance of the music raise it above the ordinary level of the genre.

The cast is a fair one, the weakest link being Giuseppe Gentile, who sings in a pleasant enough light tenor, but does the recitatives in an unpleasant nasal sing-song. The two basses, Giorgio Onesti and Tito Dolciotti, are quite good while soprano Angelica Tuccari sings a vocally sure heroine and even manages, at times, to be convincing. Nestore Catalani is a creditable baritone who sings well throughout the work.

The little opera is directed by Giuseppe Morelli in sprightly fashion and Period's recording is uniformly good. A libretto and notes on the opera are supplied.

W.

Wagner: Lohengrin (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Bayreuth Festival, 1953, conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 5-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-16) \$29.75.

Lohengrin.....Wolfgang Windgassen (t)
Elsa.....Eleanor Steber (s)
Ortrud.....Astrid Varney (c)
Telramund.....Hermann Uhde (bs)
King Henry.....Josef Greindl (bt)
Herald.....Hans Braun (bt)

Lo, the poor record reviewer! No sooner had this writer finished a review of the Decca *Lohengrin* recording than a new one dropped into his lap. This present one, a recording of an actual performance at the Bayreuth Festival of 1953, is a massive one, comprising ten sides. The cast, drawn presumably from the best singers available, is a strong one: Steber, Varnay, Windgassen and Greindl and, at the helm, the veteran Keilberth.

Eleanor Steber does a fine Elsa, by and large. There are moments when she seems a bit frantic, and then her voice gets out of hand, as it were, and she becomes strident. But these times are few and her performance of the taxing role must be accounted a success. Astrid Varnay is a somewhat light-voiced Ortrud but a musically convincing one.

Wolfgang Windgassen, one of the better German tenors of this post-war era, is a vocally perfect Lohengrin. He has the youth and bright voice that one expects from a Knight of the Grail, and throughout the opera he is a tower of strength. His singing of *In fernem Land* and his part in the *Bridal Scene* are high spots of the recording. Josef Greindl is a dignified and vocally secure King Henry. Telramund is sung by Hermann Uhde. To borrow a phrase from Anna Russell, "He sings it very well."

Despite the presence of so many excellent voices, however, this set, while better than the Decca version mentioned previously, is not quite up to the considerably earlier Urania recording. It drags and meanders along in somnolent fashion due to the excessively leisurely tempi adopted by Keilberth. There may be some who like this sort of thing (after all, it does make the opera last longer) but this writer wished he could reach in and shake the conductor and get him to put some life into the proceedings.

The recorded sound is fair, suffering from auditorium noises and sundry clunkings backstage. Of its genre, however, it is a better than average job. A libretto is included.

W.

CHORAL



Handel: Messiah (complete). (Sung in English).

Margaret Ritchie (soprano); Constance Shacklock (contralto); William Herbert (tenor); Richard Standen (bass); London Philharmonic Choir and London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-308) \$19.85.

It is doubtful if any piece of music has had as much artistic mayhem perpetrated on it as Handel's *Messiah*. The work is over two hundred years old and has been given countless times by professional and amateur groups. The size of these groups varied from a few dozen singers accompanied by an organ or piano to several thousands aided and abetted by a monstrous four hundred piece orchestra. Despite all this, *Messiah* has survived and even grown in favor—it is perhaps the greatest tribute ever given a work of art. Now, something new has happened to this undying masterpiece and, for a change, something good. All the accretions of the years have been stripped away and it is presented (as closely as is possible in this day and age) as Handel conceived it some two hundred and twelve years ago.

The performance recorded by Dr. Scherchen and his soloists, chorus and orchestra is a revelation. This writer was entranced from the magical opening

Comfort ye my people (sung very softly, by the way, and with perfect expression) to the massive *Amen Chorus*. The choir and orchestra number about forty persons each, the same as in the first Dublin performance and, in addition, the score has been edited in accordance with memoranda made at that time.

It is difficult to describe what these restorations mean. Perhaps it would be best to say that virtually a new composition by Handel is the result. The impact of the piece is tremendous—gone are the bloated orchestrations and overpowering effects of large choruses. Now every note is heard in its proper perspective—it can be compared, perhaps, to always having heard Bach fugues played on a large Wurlitzer and then suddenly hearing the same pieces on a good baroque organ.

One final observation may give a clue as to the difference between this *Messiah* and the others. The writer has been trying to convince himself, against all reason and sense of style, that the present recording of the *Messiah* has a lot in common with Berlioz' oratorio *L'Enfance du Christ* despite the fact that Berlioz certainly never heard this version of it and in spite of the fact that Berlioz did not like Handel's music ("Ce tonneau de porc et de bière . . ." was Berlioz' description of Handel). Nevertheless, the similarity exists, at least in one listener's mind.

Soloists, orchestra and chorus are all superb—the performance is magnificent! Dr. Scherchen and Westminster have done an artistic service that deserves the highest praise. Even if you own all the previously recorded *Messiahs* make room for this one. Informative notes by Edward Tatnall Canby are included, as is the text, in as plush a package as has yet been issued. W.

Walton: Belshazzar's Feast. Dennis Noble (baritone), London Philharmonic Choir and Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5248) \$5.95.

Holst: The Planets, Op. 32. London Philharmonic Choir and Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5235) \$5.95.

While Westminster has offered many fine records to the public, it has produced nothing finer than this pair of Boult-conducted English works. *Belshazzar's Feast*, although previously recorded, is on LP for the first time, and we do not envy anyone who attempts another LP of it for quite some time, for this one will be nearly impossible to better. The London Philharmonic Choir sings magnificently and with unusually fine diction; Dennis Noble, the only soloist in the work, is ideal in the part—he has long been associated with this role. Anyone interested in oratorios, cantatas and such choral forms will find this a highly stimulating work. The welding of music to text is accomplished in a most natural manner. The chorus

sings most of the time, and its part is difficult. Sir Osbert Sitwell was responsible entirely for the text. Essentially it is a dramatized abridgement of the Biblical verses which describe the fall of Babylon. To this familiar account, which is found in the fifth chapter of Daniel, Sir Osbert added lines from Psalm 81 and Psalm 137. The finished product ostensibly was a continuous entity, but Walton elected long pauses to indicate what he deemed transition points in the narrative. Both performance and reproduction of this work are superlative.

Of possibly more general interest is the orchestral work by Holst, *The Planets*. The composer claims there is no program music in the suite, and while he was interested in astrology, the planets merely served as inspiration for music. The seven sections of this work are, nevertheless, descriptive in a sense. Some of the music borders on the bombastic, but what else could describe *Mars, The Bringer of War*, other than the heavily scored music Holst contrived? The other sections, many of a mystical nature, are really fine music, and the whole work is considered a good piece of contemporary writing. The final section, *Neptune, The Mystic*, enlists an offstage women's chorus, in wordless, six-part writing, as part of the "infinite" effect which Holst so ably creates. Boult's reading of *The Planets* is as fine as one is likely ever to hear, and Westminster's reproduction is magnificent. More recordings by this masterful conductor are eagerly awaited and will be mighty welcome. S.

Bach: Christmas Oratorio. (Sung in German). Gunthild Weber, Lore Fischer (sopranos); Heinz Marten (tenor); Horst Gunther (bass) with the Orchestra and Choir of the Detmold Academy of Music with the Collegium Pro Arte conducted by Kurt Thomas. 3-12" discs in box (*L-OL-50001/3) \$17.85.

Bach's monumental *Weihnachts-Oratorium* receives, in this Oiseau-Lyre release, what may well be considered its definitive performance. The work is a long one, being actually six self-contained cantatas, many of which were borrowed from earlier compositions. Despite its length however, interest is sustained in this performance. As for the "borrowings," only the most carping of critics could find fault, for all the music Bach wrote was *ad major gloriam Dei* and to bring up the fact (as has been done) that some of the music was originally intended for secular use is absurd.

This recording by conductor Thomas and his forces is an excellent one. The performance is spirited and the various moods are delineated in masterly fashion. The soloists are all accomplished singers; even the tenor, usually a stumbling block, sings very well here. The chorus, made up of students from the Detmold Academy, is a first class one, and they go about their task with an enthusiasm and a knowledge that are obviously the result of careful preparation. Their job is no easy one, but

thorough training enables them to negotiate all the difficult passages without a slip and to sing with precision and accuracy.

It is unfortunate that London Records were so niggardly as regards packaging. The set is innocent of text, and a few cursory notes on one of the three jackets are all that is offered. As one has had occasion to remark before, at these prices the prospective purchaser is entitled to a little more consideration.

The set, however, despite the absence of text and adequate notes, is far, far superior to the two previous recordings of the work, one of which was reviewed in TNR December 1952. The recording here is good, without being, in any way, astonishing.

W.

Bach: Cantata No. 70 ("Wachet Betet"). (Sung in German). Anny Felbermayer (soprano); Erika Wien (alto); Hugo Meyer Welfing (tenor); Norman Foster (bass); Choir of the Bach Guild and Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-524) \$5.95.

And still the Bach *Cantatas* come pouring from the record presses. This time it is Number 70 "*Wachet betet, seid bereit allezeit*" in a first recording by Bach Guild who, incidentally, can always be relied upon for a musicianly as well as a technically competent job.

This particular *cantata* is of considerable musical and historic interest due to the fact that it was written in 1716, while Bach was at Weimar. Seven years later, while at the St. Thomas School, he re-wrote it, adding recitatives for each aria and placing a chorale in the middle.

The soloists, with the exception of tenor Welfing, are very good—the always excellent Anny Felbermayer being outstanding. The chorus and orchestra under Dr. Prohaska's sure direction sing and play in fine style, and the resultant performance is one that invokes the spirit of the mighty Johann Sebastian.

The recording is good and superior notes are furnished by Sidney Finkelstein, who also made the new translation of the German text which is included.

W.

VOCAL

Hindemith: Das Marienleben, Op. 27. (Sung in German). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Erich Itor Kahn (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-196) \$11.90.

Some twenty-five years ago Paul Hindemith wrote a song cycle called *Das Marienleben*. Recently he re-worked the score, revising it considerably because, he tells us in the extended commentary accompanying the set, in its earlier form the cycle was eminently unsingable; there were awkward intervals, unassimilated chromaticisms and difficult progressions. This revised version, built squarely on the earlier work, remedies some of these difficulties; and

naturally, in the intervening years, Hindemith has changed his musical thought and planning. Here, then, is the new *Das Marienleben* consisting, as did its predecessor, of fifteen songs that describe various episodes in Mary's life. The texts are by Rainer Maria Rilke and are largely based on the familiar Biblical accounts.

Jennie Tourel sings the cycle with considerable insight and brings to the task her warm, lovely mezzo. This is not music that can be easily grasped on one or two hearings. Hindemith's idiom is advanced and it depends largely on the listener's good will for its favorable reception. This reviewer has never cared for Hindemith's philosophy of art, particularly the *gebrauchsmusik* angle and even though the extended *apologia* that accompanies the set reads well, he feels that the leopard has not changed its spots. "Hindemith," writes Constant Lambert, "calls himself a craftsman, never a tone poet, and has said that 'a composer should never write unless he is acquainted with the demand for his work. The times of consistent composing for one's own satisfaction are probably gone forever.' This anti-aesthetic no-nonsense-about-me type of argument is so superficially palatable . . . that few people seem to have given it sufficient attention to realize its patent fallacies. Like most decadent movements in modern music, *Gebrauchsmusik* is based on a misapprehension of the medium in which the composer expresses himself."

It could very well be that this music would reward patient investigation and repeated hearings but, and this is where the good will comes in, this reviewer had neither the time nor, to be completely honest, the inclination.

Columbia's recording is excellent, the notes are detailed and authoritative but only the English texts have been supplied and, since the songs are sung in German, what good are they?

W.

A Florence Foster Jenkins Recital. Florence Foster Jenkins (soprano?) accompanied by Cosme McMoon (piano). 1-10" disc (*V-LRT-7000) \$2.99.

CONTENTS: *The Magic Flute*—Queen of the Night (Mozart); *The Musical Snuff Box* (Liadoff); *Like a Bird* (McMoon); *Lakmé*—Bell Song (Delibes); *Serenata Mexicana* (McMoon); *Pearl of Brazil*—*Charmant Oiseau* (David); *Biasy* (Bach-Pavlovich); *Die Fledermaus*—Adele's Laughing Song (J. Strauss).

With the publicity which will undoubtedly be given this disc by RCA Victor, Mme. Florence Foster Jenkins will be introduced to others than those "in the know," so to speak; for many of us already own the Melotone-78 rpm discs of these hilarious selections, which have been available for a dozen years or so. (Aside to these owners: the surface noise is still present on the Victor LP disc, so don't think you will get a better pressing by buying

the present record).

To those who may not have heard of the ineluctable Mme. Jenkins, perhaps these excerpts from reviews of her fabulous concerts will serve as a proper introduction: "Mrs. Jenkins' nightqueenly swoops and hoots, her wild wallowings in descending trill, her repeated staccato notes like a cuckoo in its cups, are innocently uproarious to hear . . ." (Time, June 16, 1941); ". . . to add spice to your collection, to make you a Ripley, (get the record of) Florence Foster Jenkins' singing of the dramatic aria of the Queen of the Night from Mozart's *Magic Flute*. What I might say about it would be libelous, so I won't." (Esquire, Oct. '41); ". . . She was undaunted by either the composers' intents or the opinions of her auditors." (New York Journal-American).

These arias and songs are the funniest things ever! But to really appreciate them you must have a copy of the little booklet entitled *Florence Foster Jenkins: An Appreciation*, by Milton Bendiner (Price \$1); it will explain so much that is inexplicable, and is more than worth its modest price. (If you already own the 78 discs, the book is available separately, and the price includes postage in U. S. A.).

"Some may say that I couldn't sing," Lady Florence reflected as the perspective of her career receded into the shadow, "but no one can say that I didn't sing." Q. E. D.

Schumann: Dichterliebe, Op. 48. (Sung in German). One and one-half sides, and **Schumann: (4) Songs.** (Sung in German). Gerard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-940) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Du bist wie eine Blume*, Op. 25, No. 24; *Geständnis*, Op. 74, No. 7; *Der Nussbaum*, Op. 25, No. 3; *Der Sandmann*, Op. 79, No. 12.

Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53. (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the London Philharmonic (Male) Choir and London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. One side, and **Brahms: Gestilte Sehnsucht**, Op. 91, No. 1 and **Brahms: Wiegenlied**, Op. 91, No. 2. (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) accompanied by Max Gilbert (viola) and Phyllis Spurr (piano). And **Brahms: Sapphische Ode**, Op. 94, No. 4 and **Brahms: Botschaft**, Op. 47, No. 2. (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) accompanied by Phyllis Spurr (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-903) \$5.95.

Each new *lieder* release by the excellent French baritone Gerard Souzay seems to add to his musical and artistic stature. This current disc, of Schumann *lieder* and the song-cycle *Dichterliebe*, is a fine job, ranking second only to the fabulous recording by Gerhard Hüsch. And, incidentally, M. Souzay is beginning to sound like his illustrious predecessor.

This writer had quite a shock when the opening words of the cycle *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, came from the speaker—it could have passed for Hüsch—but as the cycle progressed differences became apparent. Nevertheless, it is the highest praise at one's command to compare M. Souzay favorably with the great German singer.

As to the performance of this music, it is all most appropriate, being neither sentimental nor dull (it is very easy to "ham up" Schumann), and the resultant performance is about the best on LP discs. The recording is fair, having a tendency to "blast" on some of the louder passages. This may have been due to a faulty pressing, however. No texts are supplied.

This newer recording of the *Dichterliebe* replaces Souzay's earlier effort reviewed in these columns in September 1952.

The art of the late Kathleen Ferrier is much admired in many quarters including this one, and the issue of her recording of the Brahms *Alto Rhapsody* plus the songs will be welcome. This performance, which ranks with the very best of this music on discs, will no doubt be familiar to some from her 78 rpm recordings of the same music. Although there is no mention of the fact on the jacket, the writer feels sure that all but the *Sapphische Ode* and *Botschaft* are dubbings of earlier 78's. This is not too important, however, since even if it were the case, the transfer has been very successfully accomplished. The sound is good. Here, as elsewhere, London does not supply any texts and the notes verge on the uninformative. W.

French and German Songs. Janice Harsanyi (soprano) accompanied by Otto Herz (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-581) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Chère Nuit* (Bachelet); *Nell* (Fauré); *Le Mariage des Roses* (Franck); *Beau Soir* (Debussy); *Sainte* (Ravel); *Rencontre* (Fauré); *Mandoline* (Debussy); *Chanson Triste* (Duparc); *Mondnacht* (Schumann); *Immer leiser* (Brahms); *Die Nacht* (R. Strauss); *Schöne Weige meiner Leiden* (Schumann); *Es hing der Reif* (Brahms); *Stille Tranen* (Schumann); *Zueignung* (R. Strauss).

Spirituals. Inez Matthews (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Jonathan Brice (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-580) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Roun About de Mountain*; *Hear de Lambs a-Cryin'*; *Li'l Boy*; *Talk About a Chile*; *Lord, I Didn't Know*; *New-Born Again*; *Gonna Ride Up in de Chariot*; *Crucifixion*; *Balm in Gilead*; *His Name So Sweet*; *Fix Me, Jesus*; *I'm Goin' to Tell God All My Troubles*; *Po' Pilgrim*; *You're Tired, Chile*; *Live a Humble*; *Hold On*; *They Led My Lord Away*; *Witness*; *You Mus' Come in By an' Thro' de Lamb*; *De Gospel Train*; *Plenty Good Room*.

Two young singers are introduced this month by Period Records.

Miss Janice Harsanyi is a young (twenty-five)

soprano from Massachusetts whose training has been entirely in this country. It would be fine if one could report that Miss Harsanyi was, as the jacket states, one of the "Great New Voices of Today." But such is not yet the case. Her vocal production is marred by a rapid vibrato that one listener, in all events, found irritating—all the more so because it is not necessary. Aside from this distressing circumstance, Miss Harsanyi's voice is pleasant enough, fresh, youthful and capable of coloring. Her choice of material is odd, being a mixture of the well known and the unfamiliar. One says "odd" for her purposes could have been better served had there been either more variety or less. The present disc is confusing in its mixture of styles and Miss Harsanyi is not yet a sufficiently accomplished singer to bring the affair off.

The other disc is quite different. Miss Inez Matthews is obviously a more polished artist and the possessor of a really beautiful mezzo-soprano. Her control, method and general knowledge of her material (there are some twenty-one spirituals) is that of a mature singer. All the songs are sung with genuine feeling, and some of them, notably *Balm in Gilead* and *Roun about de mountain rise* to great heights both musically and interpretively.

The discs are numbered, respectively Volume 1 and Volume 6 so presumably Period is expecting to introduce at least four more young singers. The recording is excellent throughout and the accompaniments are deftly handled by the respective pianists. W.

Dvorák: Gypsy Songs, Op. 55. And Dvorák: Love Songs, Op. 83, Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 6. One side, and **Grieg (8) Songs.** Dorothy Warenskjold (soprano) with the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by George Greeley. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8247) \$5.70.

CONTENTS: *Solvejg's Song; On St. John's Eve; Tides of Spring; I Love Thee; A Dream; Thanks for Thy Advice; A Swan; Eros* (Grieg).

The songs of Dvorák, with the exception of the overdone *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, are not as well known in this country as they deserve to be, and this disc might well serve to make those interested a little better acquainted with this facet of Dvorák's work.

The group of eight Gypsy Songs, including such excellent scene paintings as *To the heights of Tatra* and *Silent the Words* are well charged with the fire and melancholy associated with gypsy life. The opus 83 *Love Songs* are represented by four, *Death seems to many men the goal; I walk so softly; In deepest forest shades* and *O could our love but lead us*. All are youthful in spirit despite revision by the mature Dvorák in 1888.

Edvard Grieg, who might be considered (insofar as the songs are concerned) the Norwegian counterpart of Dvorák, is represented by the eight songs listed above. Most of them are quite familiar, having been recorded many times before.

Miss Warenskjold brings to the record a pleasant,

strong and obviously youthful voice that has been well trained. If her singing lacks subtlety, it may be because she has taken on a little bit more than she can handle, insofar as establishing variety among the nineteen songs she has chosen—it would be quite an order for many a more experienced singer.

There are two drawbacks to the disc. First, the use of an orchestra for accompaniment, while popular, is not in the best of taste. Second, while the use of an English translation for the Dvorák songs might be condoned, one feels that a singer with the name of Warenskjold should be able to sing the Grieg songs in the original Norwegian. W.

Folk Songs of Spain. Germaine Montero (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Salvador Bacarisse. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7001) \$4.

CONTENTS: *El baile de Avila; Corroclocio; Folia de San Vincente de la Barquers; Asturiana; Ya se van los pastores; Gallegada; Con las Abejas; Los cuatro Muleros; Los Contrabandistas de Ronad; Paso Rio; Eres Alta y Delgada; No hay quien pueda; Jotas.*

This disc was awarded the "Grand Prix du Disque" in Paris in 1953 because of its "excellence of performance and beauty of sound." Vanguard makes this announcement on the record's jacket. It is not so stated, but we presume that it was considered the best record of the year in its class. Germaine Montero, while quite unknown in the United States, has been a favorite in both her native France and Spain for many years. She first made her mark on the dramatic stage and more recently has turned her attention to folk and popular songs. She is said to be the finest popular chanteuse to appear in Europe in many years.

Herbert: Naughty Marietta (highlights). One side, and **Friml: The Firefly** (highlights). Soloists, Chorus and Paul Britten and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3080) \$4.85.

This disc contains run-of-the-mill recordings of excerpts from two of the most popular musical plays of our time. Reproduction good.

PIANO



Debussy: Pour le Piano and **Debussy: Estampes.** One side, and **Debussy: Images** (Bks. I & II). Claudio Arrau (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4786) \$5.95.

Debussy: Suite Bergamasque. One side, and **Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit.** Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-754) \$5.95.

Debussy: Fantaisie for Piano and Orchestra. One side, and **Poulenc: Aubade for Piano and 18 Solo Instruments.** Fabienne Jacquinot (piano) with the Westminster Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3069) \$4.85.

The three LP discs listed above contain some very

excellent French keyboard music. We wish that we had space to cover them in detail, but at present about the best that we can do is to list them so that our readers will know that they are available. The very excellent recording of Debussy's *Fantasie for Piano and Orchestra*, a work which was not performed during the composer's lifetime and was not published until two years after his death, caught our fancy and we do not hesitate to recommend it to the discerning music lover.

A Liszt Recital. Peter Katin (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-934) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Après une Lecture de Dante* (from "Années de Pèlerinage"); *Polonaise No. 2* in E; *Consolations Nos. 1-6*.

Liszt: Sonata in B minor. One side, and Liszt: *Mephisto Waltz* and Liszt: *Valse impromptu*. Edith Farnadi (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5266) \$5.95.

Liszt: Mephisto Waltz. One side, and Chopin: *Barcarolle in F-sharp minor, Op. 60*. Leonard Penrario (piano). 1-10" disc (*CL-H-8246) \$2.98.

A Liszt Recital. Andor Földes (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4071) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: *Sonetto del Petrarca No. 123*; *Au Lac de Wallenstadt*; *Valse Oubliée*; *Soirées de Vienne* (Nos. 4 & 7).

Liszt: Liebestraum No. 3 and Liszt: *La Campanella*. One side, and Nielsen: *Chaconne, Op. 32*. France Ellegaard (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9065) \$2.95.

A flood of recordings of Liszt's keyboard music recently arrived at the studio. The space available does not permit us to more than list the various records. However, we want our readers to know that these LP discs are available.

Music of Debussy. Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3054) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Estampes*; *Suite Bergamasque*; (2) *Arabesques*; *Reverie*; *La Plus que Lente—Valse*; *La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin*.

Shostakovich: (24) Preludes, Op. 24. Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3070) \$4.85.

Music of de Falla. Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3071) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Fantasia Baetica*; (4) *Spanish Pieces*; *Serenata Andaluza*; *El Amor Brujo—Ritual Dance of Fire*.

Schumann: (3) Romances for Piano, Op. 28. And Schumann: *Blumenstück, Op. 19*. One side, and Mendelssohn: *Variations Sérieuses, Op. 54*. And Mendelssohn: *Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 14*. Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3029) \$4.85.

These four LP discs will clearly show why the

young pianist, Menahem Pressler, has gained such renown on this side of the Atlantic since he first came to the United States in 1946. He is certainly a most sensitive artist with more than ample technique. His playing of Debussy is an outstanding accomplishment. Of particular interest to us was his fine performance of Shostakovich's *Twenty-four Preludes for Piano*. We realize that these little works are uneven in quality, and as a whole they are not to be rated as great music; but many of them are fascinating, and they must be great fun to play.



ORGAN

Bach Organ Works. John Eggington, playing the organ of the Church of Ste. Radegonde, Poitiers (France). 1-12" disc (*L-OL-50012) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Prelude and Fugue in G*; *Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C*; *Prelude and Fugue in E minor*; *Chorale Prelude "Ach, bleib bei uns, Herr Jesu Christ;" Fugue in D*.

Mendelssohn Organ Works. John Eggington, playing the organ of the Institut des Jeunes Aveugles, Paris. 1-12" disc (*L-OL-50013) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonata No. 1 in F minor*; *Sonata No. 3 in A*; *Sonata No. 6 in D minor*; *Prelude and Fugue in C minor*.

Fanciers of organ records have still another set of discs coming their way, records in a style and tradition which is a much admired one in organ circles. The French school of organ playing has produced some of the outstanding artists of this noble instrument, and French organs are instruments which never cease to thrill by the distinctive quality of their tone. John Eggington is heard to advantage in some classics of the repertoire, playing two fine organs in France recorded with splendid quality of tone and clarity. These discs are among today's best in organ recording, and the surfaces are smooth and quiet. We thoroughly enjoyed the three Mendelssohn sonatas and recommend them to collectors of organ discs who may not as yet have them. The organ Eggington uses for this disc is a superb instrument, boasting typical French reeds, as well as many other lovely voices. Eggington registers very well, plenty of variety but not too much jumping around. This is admirably true of his Bach registration, and the organ used for the Bach disc has a fine foundation tone.

Among the many blooms in the great LP garden is an every increasing crop of organ records, and we will find more and more duplications, which will give the purchaser a choice of several versions. Within the next year there will be a choice of discs containing Mendelssohn organ sonatas; there is already some choice of many Bach works. We believe Eggington will get his share with ease, for many folks will prefer the quality of the recorded sound on these discs to some of the Biggs records, espe-

cially the earlier numbers. Biggs, however, can hold his own as far as performance is concerned, for example, the Bach *G major Prelude and Fugue*, which we found to have more snap and accent in his performance. Organ record collectors will find it well worth their while to hear Eggington's records, and when they do they will probably await his future releases eagerly.

S.



DICTION

Pardon My Bloop! Fluffs, Spoonerisms, Slips, Flubs and Bloopers from Radio and TV collected by Kermit Schafer. 1-10" disc (*JUBILEE LP-2) \$4.

We don't know how this disc will strike you, but it left us weak with laughter. Kermit Schafer is a native New Yorker and the author of one of the nation's best selling books on radio and TV boners entitled *Your Slip Is Showing*. The collection of "fluffs" made by radio and TV performers has been one of his hobbies over the years, and his identity with radio and television boners has resulted in his becoming a central clearing source for material of this nature.

Material for this recording was gathered from transcriptions, kinescope sound tracks, off the air recordings, tapes and "other sources." We rather suspect that many of the boners were re-created especially for this disc—that is, they are not the actual fluffs, but are re-enacted by actors. However, they are reputed to be authentic in that the error did actually occur, and it is not to be construed that these are fictitious boners. Many are from actual broadcasts, however; one cannot mistake Harry Von Zell's introducing "the President of the United States, Hoobert Heever." Included also is the famous slip of Uncle Don after he thought he was off the air. Some of the bloopers are not for the ears of maiden aunts.

Playing this disc for our friends never fails to send them into hysterics, and we predict a rather substantial sale for this unusual little item.

VIOLIN



Milstein Recital. Nathan Milstein (violin) accompanied by Carlo Bussotti (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8259) \$5.70.

CONTENTS: *Sonata No. 12* (Pergolesi); *Intermezzo* (Schumann); *Allegro* (Brahms); *Burleska* (Suk); *Nigun* (Bloch); *Paganiniana* (Milstein).

Now that Milstein is a Capitol artist, he has recorded these interesting pieces that have proved popular with his concert audiences, to be released under that label. Capitol has seen to it that they have been recorded with fine fidelity; for that company is very anxious that its new artist maintain the wide popularity he built up under a competing label.

VIOLONCELLO



Music of Spain. Janos Starker (violoncello) and Leon Pommers (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-584) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Suite Populaire Espagnole* (Falla); *Fandanguillo* (Torroba); *El Amore Brujo*—Ritual Dance of Fire (Falla); *Goyescas*—Intermezzo (Granados); *Andaluza* (Granados); *Rumores de la Caleta*—Malaguena (Albeniz); *Requiebros* (Cassado); *Dance of the Green Devil* (Cassado).

The celebrated Hungarian violoncellist, Janos Starker, has turned his attention to some music that is appropriate for his instrument and a very pleasing LP disc is the happy result. This music is not profound, but it is in the best of taste, and it certainly makes very pleasant listening.

BAND



A Band Concert. Deutchmeister Band conducted by Julius Hermann. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3011) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Grinzinger Marsch*; *Steirischer Jodler*; *Im Kahlenbergerdorf*; *Dorner Marsch*; *Wiener Walzer*; *Grenadier Marsch*; *Das Liegt bei uns im blut*; *Aller ehren is Oesterreich voll*.

Marches Around the World. Vanguard Military Band conducted by Hans Anninger. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7006) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Le père la Victoria* (France); *Musik voran* (Austria); *Castaldo March* (Czechoslovakia); *Zum Städtel hinaus* (Germany); *Lyuck-Lyuck* (Hungary); *Giocondita* (Italy); *Radetzky March* (Austria).

There seems to be a revival in the interest in band recordings, and thus we believe that the release of this pair of LP discs will be particularly welcome. "A Band Concert" by the Deutchmeister Band is similar to the several records that have been issued of this famous Viennese organization. The review copy of this disc which we received had the labels reversed—you might check your copy before you purchase it . . . "Marches Around the World" should be of especial interest to schools and other groups who may be planning a pageant where music of various lands is called for. Our only criticism of this disc is that it would seem to us that the percussion instruments are given undue prominence at the expense of the other sections in the band.

MISCELLANEOUS



Pezel: Tower and Festive Music of the 17th Century. Brass Ensemble directed by Gunther Schüller. 1-12" disc (*EMS-7) \$5.95.

This unusual disc contains fine examples of *Stadt-*

pfeiffer or "Town piper" music of 17th century Germany, the sort of music that the town musicians played on the city towers and battlements and at great public or private celebrations. Each side of this LP disc contains seven short selections such as sonatas (slow movements in two parts) and various dance movements (sarabandes, allemandes, gigues, etc.). The composer of this music was the 17th century Austrian musician Johann Pezel (1639-1694) who, with Buxtehude, is considered one of the immediate fore-runners of the great J. S. Bach.

Gunther Schuller, a musical student of note and first horn of the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra, has chosen able brass players and has directed the recording of this unique disc. Reproduction of first quality is in evidence.

Arte Clasico Flamenco. Ramon Montoya (guitar). 1-12" disc (*PHM-PH-108) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Bulerias; Solea; Taranta; Fandango; Siguiyia; Minera; Granadina; Guajira; Farruca; Rondena; Tango—Mayor y Menor; Alegria.*

Patterns in Flamenco. Carlos Montoya (guitar). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1026) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Bulerias; Rondena; Jota Aragonesa; Fandanguillo; Guajiras; Zambra; Seguiyia; Saeta.*

Here we have two generations of the famous Montoya family, Ramon Montoya and his nephew Carlos. Ramon Montoya, if he is still living must be well toward eighty or more and was considered in his prime to be the greatest flamenco (Gypsy) guitarist of the last one hundred years. We don't know when the present recording was made; Ramon made many recordings over a long period of time, but we would certainly say that it indicates the playing of a master. We do not profess to be an authority, but we rather feel that Carlos has within him the musical spirit of his family.

Play, Gypsy! Edi Csoka and his Gypsy Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7003) \$4.75.

CONTENTS: *Folk Dance; Hungarian Song and Czardas; Concert Srba; Sina Hora; Roumanian Folk Song; Gloomy Sunday; Roumanian Canary.*

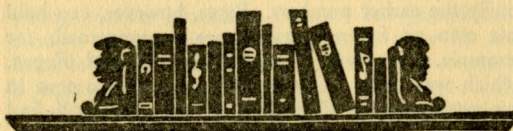
Gypsy Songs and Czardas. Antal Kocze and his Gypsies. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3015) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Green Portal; Lover's Promise; On Lake Balaton; Rakocsi Berczenyi; The Great Bear; Shepherd's Songs; Happy Tunes; Dream Love; The Happy Hobo.*

Gypsy Music. Antal Kocze and his Gypsies. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3010) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Transylvanian Dance; Sad Hungarian Song; Serbian Dance; Hora Staccato; Czardas; Hungarian Song and Dance; Magyar Dance.*

Here is some typical Gypsy music in the Old World tradition splendidly recorded.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Poly-music, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ◊ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

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MAY, 1954

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

SOMETIME ago we heard that Kapp Records, Inc., was planning to release an LP disc entitled *One God: The Ways We Worship Him*. It was to be based on the theory that Catholics, Jews and Protestants had much in common. They all believe in one God; they all use the Bible; all set aside one day in the week for worship; they all honor the Commandments of Moses, which are summed up in the first and great Commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind," and the second which is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Today this unique record arrived, and we put it on the turntable with fear and trembling—we thought surely that someone was going to be hurt, someone was going to be offended. We played it through, we listened most carefully, and we read the notes that accompanied it; we can honestly state that we cannot see how any Catholic, Jew or Protestant could take exception to anything that is recorded on this disc or printed in the pages of notes. If such a thing has been accomplished, and we believe that it has, it is little less than a miracle.

The text for the recording of *One God* is based on the book by Florence Mary Fitch, who also supplies the very interesting and illuminating notes that accompany this disc. In the very simple plot, Eddie Albert plays himself. He is nicely assisted by members of the Gramercy Players, and the music is taken care of by the University Interfaith Chorale. Eddie meets three children, one a Catholic, one a Jew and one a Protestant. These children are all friends and play together every day. Eddie asks each about his or her religion, and at his suggestion they visit each other's place of worship. From this one may gain a great lesson in tolerance and in the democratic way of life; and all of us

are forcibly reminded of the great blessing that is ours in America, in that we are guaranteed by the Constitution absolute freedom of religion.

We can think of many uses for this unique recording. It should be of particular value in neighborhood houses, boys' clubs and schools where young people of various religious backgrounds are thrown together. In individual homes it should be of real help in teaching tolerance; for, although it indicates the marked differences in the various religions, it stresses that which they all have in common: namely, the belief in one eternal God, the Father of us all.

If the recording of *One God: The Ways We Worship Him* is not available locally, orders sent direct to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled. The price is \$5.95.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-one years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning May 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Dvorák: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95* ("From the New World"). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1778) \$5.72.

The last time we reviewed a "New World" Symphony, November 1953, we had the Horenstein performance (*VX-PL-7590) and described it as a highly dramatic interpretation, rather individual but deeply

felt. We also mentioned our favorite readings were Ormandy and Kubelik and acknowledged the excellence of the Stokowski and Szell discs. We now have another strong entry for the "New World" sweepstakes, and the field is getting crowded with some fine contestants. RCA Victor has applied its finest "New Orthophonic" High Fidelity technique to Toscanini's reading, with the result that this is a thrilling job from every standpoint. Toscanini gets off to a characteristically brisk start and maintains a steady course through the first movement. The wistful Largo is played with a lovely calm and gentleness, and the third and fourth movements have their inherent brilliance and fire outlined with care and accuracy by the maestro. As indicated above, the quality of the recorded sound is excellent, and mirrors the performance with exceptional fidelity.

Coming soon after the announcement of Toscanini's retirement and the disbanding of the NBC Orchestra, this release will have added significance to the many admirers of this man's art. Those primarily interested in acquiring a "New World" Symphony recording will do well to investigate the field. If high fidelity is not of prime importance, Ormandy still has the most beautiful sounding orchestral performance; Stokowski likewise, with a more individual interpretation. Of the newer reproductions, Kubelik's sound (and his reading) are a match for any others; Szell is rather close to Toscanini in many respects; Horenstein has the most dramatic and interesting views on the subject. Toscanini's reading is as straight as it could be, and will wear well over a period of time. Of the six we have mentioned, you will do well to compare the two or three ones most likely to please your taste; all six (plus a couple of others in the LP lists) are admirable performances, which this wonderful symphony deserves. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 3 in D minor. Two and one-half sides, and **Mahler: Symphony No. 10.** Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 2-12" discs in album (*SPA-30/1) \$11.90.

Mahler: Symphony No. 6 in A minor ("Tragic"). Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 2-12" discs in album (*SPA-59/60) \$11.90.

Music for specialists might very well be an accurate description of these two albums issued by Spa.

The Bruckner *Third* appears in its first, and thus far only, recorded version. This characteristic symphony dates from 1872-73 and is dedicated to Bruckner's idol, Richard Wagner. It was a dismal failure on its first performance (1877) and, unfortunately like the other symphonies, has not established itself in the repertoires of other than Central European orchestras. The performance recorded by Herr Adler and the Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra does not do Bruckner justice, in this writer's opinion. To be sure, Bruckner is diffuse and grandiose by turn and thus

requires a conductor who is able to tighten up the score, a circumstance that Adler fails to realize. The resultant presentation is rambling with only a few good moments separated by stretches of dreary note playing. For Brucknerites the recording should prove of genuine interest, however, for there are moments when the old man's music really shines in all its glory. The average orchestra goer or record buyer is cautioned to hear it first. Incidentally, the very sparse notes do indicate that it is the final version—that of 1889—that was used for this recording.

Coupled with the Bruckner *Symphony No. 3*, in D Minor is the unfinished *Symphony No. 10* of Mahler, the two movements of which are played in a straightforward manner. The other set, Mahler's *Symphony No. 6*, in A Minor, is almost contemporaneous with the *Kindertotenlieder* and partakes of much of the hysteria of the latter piece. The music emerges from this performance as chaotic—the work of a man emotionally upset, almost frantic. As in the Bruckner opus, however, one feels that Adler has not done the music justice. Surely Mahler was not this incoherent. W.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4827) \$5.95.

Schumann: Symphony No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 38 ("Spring"). Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. One side, and **Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120.** Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4794) \$5.95. (TNR Sept. '46 & June '49).

We can recall previous performances by Ormandy of the Brahms *Second*, recorded and live, that were rather ponderous; but this recording did not appear to be as heavy as his former interpretations—in fact, it seemed to be just about right. Since Ormandy has tightened up his reading, we would place this version at the top of the heap, for the reproduction is superlative. Our all-time favorite reading of the *Second*, as old subscribers know by now, is the old 78 rpm set by Beecham, and that is because he had a generally light touch with the work without glossing over any details. While Ormandy's reading is far richer in texture, it is the type of performance that most persons prefer, and it is admittedly a beauty. While several other versions of merit are in the LP lists, they do not match Ormandy, if for nothing more than the quality of reproduction. The only real competition is Toscanini (*V-LM-1731), whose reading is well conceived and nicely balanced. In matters of tone, orchestral sound, and reproduction we would prefer the newer disc by Ormandy—as an example compare the last half inch of the final movement. So until another *Second* comes around, we will pin the blue ribbon on the Ormandy version.

The disc containing the two Schumann symphonies

is a coupling of two previously issued 10" LP's of these same performances. Both Columbia and RCA Victor have taken a number of their 10" LP's and recut both sides on one side of a 12" disc, this being possible since the advent of variable pitch grooves. The only other coupling of the Schumann *First* and *Fourth* is a disc conducted by Keilberth (*CL-P-8129). The orchestral playing and the general type of reading is very crisp and brisk on the Szell and Leinsdorf disc; reproduction clear and somewhat dry with a pretty wide range although these are not recent recordings. Some folks may prefer Keilberth, but we think most will like this Columbia pairing, which is a good value. S.

Contemporary American Music. Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8245) \$5.70.

CONTENTS: *Adagio for Strings* (Barber); *Rounds* (Diamond); *Quiet City* (Copland); (2) *Choric Dances* (Creston).

Milhaud: Symphony No. 1. Columbia Broadcasting Symphony conducted by Darius Milhaud. One side, and **Sessions: Symphony No. 2.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4784) \$5.95. (TNR June '48 & Aug. '50).

Capitol's disc of Contemporary American Music is a well chosen group, nicely played and recorded. It resembles the Mercury disc which we reviewed here recently in that the music is not extremely cacophonous or hard to take; it is rather something which we can enjoy and of which we may well be proud to call American. Copland's *Quiet City* appears on both discs; it receives a more polished and "quiet" treatment under Golschmann, which may not make it a more idiomatic reading although it sounded smoother to us and more appropriate. The other three numbers chosen by Golschmann include the Barber *Adagio for Strings*, well known to most radio listeners from performances offered by Toscanini—it is one of his rare and infrequent nods to American music. Diamond's *Rounds* and Creston's *Choric Dances* are both superbly constructed and highly pleasant pieces to listen to. All of this music is absolute and non-programmatic, unless one wishes to recognize the theme of the play for which the *Quiet City* music was originally written. It has been a while since we have heard Diamond's *Rounds* and we were more impressed than ever with this fine work. The Concert Arts Orchestra plays with good discipline and Golschmann's readings are convincing in their American-ness. Capitol's reproduction has the fullness and warmth which characterizes their FDS recordings.

The Milhaud and Sessions combination presents contemporary music in longer form. Each of these symphonies was previously issued on single 10" LP discs; the convenience and economy of pairing them on a 12" disc is, of course, apparent. Both works

were received most cordially in these columns when first issued: the Milhaud in June 1948 and the Sessions in August 1950. The reproduction has held up well. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner").** Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8242) \$5.70.

Haydn: Symphony No. 44 in E minor ("Trauersymphonie"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 48 in C ("Maria Theresa").** Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-844) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 96 in D ("Miracle"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 97 in C.** Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-854) \$5.95.

The pair of recordings of Mozart symphonies which Capitol offers this month are of the best from every standpoint. They are among the very best of Mozart, and the performances and reproduction equal any others of these works in the catalogs. We believe this disc to be the best that Capitol has yet offered in the way of reproduction. Its strongest point is the rich quality throughout and pleasing balance; it will take tremendous volume from any phonograph and yield a sweet tone, not strident nor steely at the top, not thin nor muddy in the lower registers. There is also an ideal hall resonance present that never mars any detail. Steinberg's readings of these great symphonies is a model of good taste and style without being too much of any one thing. He is not too rigid and unbending, yet he never exaggerates nor overstresses. Nothing but praise for this wonderful record, whose surfaces, by the way, were virtually noiseless.

The London records are nicely paired; Nos. 44 and 48 belong to the early 1770's, the Nos. 96 and 97 were composed for Haydn's first visit to England (1791-2). If one were to choose between these two discs, the choice should be for the 96 and 97 disc. Besides being later and more interesting Haydn, the reproduction seems preferable, and Beinum performs them with surpassing beauty. Mogens Wöldike and the Danish orchestra play the earlier works with a style that is entirely appropriate, and with what sounds like properly reduced forces. The reproduction accorded this disc seems to lack an overall smoothness and uniformity, although at its best, it has good clarity and pleasing texture. Whatever its minor shortcomings, it is to be preferred to other LP's of these works, and of course, the disc with 96 and 97 is preferable to the other LP's of the same works. It has been a long time since we enjoyed Mozart and Haydn discs as much as this lot. S.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50030) \$5.95.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8254) \$5.70.

It has been a little more than two years since we last reviewed a new disc of *Sacre*; at that time it was Montoux and the Boston Symphony (*V-LM-1149) (TNR Feb. '52). We found it slightly better than the Ansermet recording, and preferred it to Stravinsky's own reading. Now we have two new ones, and they are both admirable, bringing to a total of five the number of recordings of this great work, all of which are good. After hearing and comparing both the new discs, we have a vivid picture of shattered nerves and broken leases among the hi-fi addicts. If ever there were a disc demonstrating tympani rolls, this one is it, and there are many other unique orchestral effects which this score contains and which the recording engineers have portrayed with uncommon skill.

Of all the recordings available of *Sacre*, the Mercury disc takes top honors with ease. As a reproduction it is an astonishing piece of work, with those tympani rolls definite in pitch, yet not tinny in sound. The volume level is exceptionally high, yet the disc tracks perfectly. The timbre of the full orchestral passages is impressive, and the solo passages are in good perspective. Among hi-fi discs, this one is a real thoroughbred. Dorati's reading is also the equal of any of the other interpreters on records. His delineation of the score is unusually clear, with the reproduction undoubtedly aiding in the final result as we hear it. The Minneapolis Orchestra plays with accuracy as well as an abundance of energy. We cannot imagine a better disc of *Sacre* than this one.

It seems a pity to rave over the Mercury at the expense of the Capitol, which is, in itself, a fine performance and a good recording. Dorati and his Minneapolis boys seem to achieve greater clarity and more dramatic impact, although their reproduction may account for this illusion. Capitol's reproduction does not have the crystalline clarity, a most desirable asset for this complicated score, with the result that much of the effect of the music is lost by the lack of definition. This type of reproduction is enjoyable in typical romantic works, but it is not effective in *Sacre*. Our unqualified recommendation is for Dorati on Mercury.

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3011) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3026) \$5.95.

When recorded performances of two symphonies reach the astonishing total of thirty-four it is high

time to have a look—a close look—at the list and see just what the most recent additions have that make them worth considering. Both the symphonies listed above enjoy, if that is the word, some seventeen performances each as of the present writing with, one feels sure, more to come.

To get down to cases—van Otterloo manages to make the delightful and engaging *Sixth* dull, no mean feat when one considers the music. He seems to be afraid to put any ginger into the proceedings, and as a result the work plods along in a droopy fashion that is both unbecoming and a little sad. There are far better versions available; Steinberg's for Capitol, Beecham's for Columbia and Toscanini's (the BBC Orchestra one) in the Victor Treasury series.

Van Kempen's performance of the *Seventh* is a straightforward one, and his orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic, sounds very fine indeed. Here again, however, there are more impressive performances, notably Scherchen's on Westminster, Münch's on Victor and Paray's on Mercury, the latter two featuring very fine sound also.

Epic's recording technique is interesting and is shown here in both its strength and weakness. The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra is a first-rate aggregation and is benefitted by the "close-up" microphoning; but the Vienna Symphony Orchestra (a generic name, one suspects) is not an organization that can be examined too closely and, as a result of these same techniques, comes off none too well.

To return to the ideas expressed at the beginning of this notice, the case for Epic's recording of the Beethoven *Seventh Symphony* can best be stated negatively by stating that there are poorer versions and that van Kempen's reading does no violence to the score. As for the "Pastoral," it falls pretty far down on the list.

W.

Copland: Music for the Theatre. One side, and Weill: *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* (Suite from "The Three-Penny Opera"). MGM Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3095) \$4.85.

Copland's *Music for the Theatre* was commissioned by Koussevitzky and was given its first performance by the Boston Symphony under his direction. This work dates from the roaring twenties and can best be described, comparatively, as the serious, accomplished counterpart to the works of the pseudo-classicists, Grofé and Gershwin. It is almost completely devoid of out-and-out tricks and cheap sentimentality, and bears evidence of unquestioned musicianship. It is impossible to expect from such nervous, raucous, tumultuous music any great or profound message; it is merely entertainment, offering exceptional tonal coloring and unusual structure as its merits . . . Kurt Weill's *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, which also dates from the twenties, is a horse of another color. In this work Weill attempted to take German jazz of the period and develop from it

a type of "serious" music that would be acceptable to the general listener. He certainly succeeded because many of the tunes from *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* were arranged by dance band leaders and were heard in night clubs all over Europe.

Both of these unusual works have been splendidly performed under the able direction of Izler Solomon. MGM has supplied excellent reproduction.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio espagnole, Op. 34. And **Rimsky-Korsakov: The Tale of the Czar Saltan—Flight of the Bumble Bee.** And **Rimsky-Korsakov: The Snow Maiden—Dance of the Tumblers.** One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45.** And **Tchaikovsky: Quartet No. 1—Andante cantabile.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4856) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Ouverture Solennelle "1812," Op. 49.** And **Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45.** Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3008) \$5.95.

Here are a number of well-known Russian pieces played by outstanding orchestras of two continents. If you haven't heard them too often, you will find them brilliantly performed and splendidly recorded on these two discs.

Haydn: Symphony No. 67 in F. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 53 in D ("Imperial").** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Sacher. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3038) \$5.95.

Here we have rather good recordings of two of Haydn's little known symphonies. *Symphony No. 67 in F* appears in Schwann's LP catalog for the first time.

Bizet: Carmen. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4826) \$5.95.

This is another in Kostelanetz's series of "Opera for Orchestra," of which his recording of *La Boheme* (*C-ML-4655) was such a great success. The present recording is more than the usual Suites from *Carmen*. Beginning with the Prelude it covers each section of the original score until the very end. It is truly a complete orchestral version of this most popular of all operas. The orchestral reproduction has been achieved with rare fidelity.

Britten: Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34. One side, and **Britten: Peter Grimes—(4) Sea Interludes & Passacaglia.** Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard Van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-917) \$5.95.

These two fine recordings of important works by Benjamin Britten were made during the fall of 1953. You will probably recall that Beinum made a recording of the Peter Grimes selections with the Concertgebouw Orchestra for English Decca (see TNR June 1948) but the present version is a new one

and has the advantage of the best of high fidelity reproduction . . . A recording of *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34* was made by the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Sir Malcolm Sargent. The recording was released in this country by Columbia (see TNR October 1947). Beinum's new recording of this interesting work is vastly superior.

Wagon Wheels. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4858) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *High Noon; On Top of Old Smoky; Wagon Wheels; I'm an Old Cowhand; Riders in the Sky; Tennessee Waltz; Home on the Range; Buckaroo Blues; The Last Roundup.*

Memories. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4796) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *My Blue Heaven; Nola; Dardanella; Poor Butterfly; The Sheik of Araby; Whispering; Nobody's Sweetheart; I'll See You in My Dreams; Stumbling; Moonlight on the Ganges; I Love You; Charleston.*

These two LP discs are for Morton Gould fans only. Don't buy them for the tunes listed unless you know and want Gould's esoteric arrangements. The initiated will think they are the tops—others beware. Reproduction—high fidelity with a vengeance.

Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suites Nos. 1 and 2. L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3018) \$5.95.

Hi-fi fans will probably prefer these renditions to the ones already in the LP catalogs because of their wide range. Musically they rate with, but not before, the better recordings of these popular Bizet selections now available.

Martini: Intermezzo. And **Milhaud: Kentuckiana** (Divertissement on 20 Kentucky Airs). Louisville Orchestra conducted by Robert Whitney. One side, and **Foss: A Parable of Death.** (Sung in English). Vera Zorina (narrator), Farold Stevens (tenor), Choir of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Louisville Orchestra conducted by Robert Whitney. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4859) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mendelssohn: Octet in E-flat, Op. 20. The Vienna Octet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-859) \$5.95.

Mendelssohn: Quartet No. 1 in E-flat, Op. 12. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Quartet No. 3 in D, Op. 44, No. 1** Curtis String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5220) \$5.95.

We are sure that we can say without fear of contradiction that these performances of these three Mendelssohn chamber works are the best that are presently available on records. If these selections

are of interest to you, you may order either or both of the above LP discs with confidence.

Schumann: Andante and Variations in B-flat, Op. 46.

Appleton and Field (duo-pianists), Ralph Oxman and Bebe Sarser (violoncellos), and John Barrows (horn). One side, and **Schumann: Konzertstueck for Four Horns and Orchestra, Op. 86.** Gerhard Goermer, Kurt Krumbein, Georg Huehne, and Karl Himmer (horns) with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7740) \$5.95.

This LP disc gives music lovers a rare opportunity of hearing the Schumann *Andante and Variations in B-flat* as it was originally written for two pianos, two violoncellos and horn. It is, of course, a well-known item in the two-piano repertoire. Coupled with it is an unusual work of considerable merit for four horns and chamber orchestra. This is hardly ever heard, probably because it isn't often that it is possible to have at one place four horn players who are capable of giving a satisfactory performance of this difficult music.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2.

One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in G, Op. 30, No. 3.** Zino Francescatti (violin) and Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4861) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 12, No. 3.

One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring").** Jean Fournier (violin) and Ginette Doyen (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5247) \$5.95.

Francescatti and Casadesus, and Fournier and Doyen, are continuing with their series of recording of the Beethoven Sonatas for Violin and Piano. Both teams have their admirers; and as all four players are musicians of sterling caliber, a choice becomes very much a matter of personal preference. Both Columbia and Westminster have supplied the best of modern reproduction.

Schubert: Quartet No. 13 in A minor, Op. 29. Two sides, and Schubert: Quartet No. 14 in D minor, Op. Posth. ("Death and the Maiden"). Two sides, and Schubert: Quartet No. 15 in D, Op. 161. Budapest String Quartet, playing the Stradivarius instruments of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Foundation in the Library of Congress. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-194) \$17.85.

Columbia is continuing with its outstanding chamber music recordings by the Budapest String Quartet recorded at the Library of Congress using the Stradivarius instruments in the Whittall Foundation collection. Connoisseurs of chamber music recordings are familiar with the previous releases in this superb series, and thus there is nothing to say but that the present discs are well up to the standard set by the earlier ones.

Mozart: Quartet No. 20 in D, K. 499 ("Hoffmeister"). One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 21 in D, K. 575 ("Cello").** Juilliard String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4863) \$5.95.

Mozart: Trio No. 3 in E, K. 542. One side, and **Mozart: Trio No. 4 in C, K. 548.** Jean Fournier (violin), Antonio Janigro (violoncello) and Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5267) \$5.95.

Now that the versions listed above are now available, they may be considered with the many other satisfactory recordings of this Mozart chamber music that is listed in the present catalogs.

CONCERTO



Schönberg: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op.

36. Louis Krasner (violin) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and **Berg: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.** Louis Krasner (violin) with the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. (TNR Sept. '41). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4857) \$5.95.

Shostakovich: Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and

Strings, Op. 35. Menahem Pressler (piano), Harry Glantz (trumpet) with the MGM Orchestra conducted by Theodore Bloomfield. One side, and **Shostakovich: Sonata No. 2 in B minor, Op. 64.** Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3079) \$4.85.

Glière: Concerto for Horn and Orchestra, Op. 91.

Valerie Polekh (horn) with the Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by Reinhold Glière. One side, and **Prokofiev: The Stone Flower—Gypsy Fantasy.** Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra conducted by Samuel Samosud. And **Glinka: Jota Aragonesa.** State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Samuel Samosud. And **Amirov: Azerbaijani Mugam Shur.** State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by N. Anosov. 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-3001) \$5.95.

If you can get to the end of the Schönberg violin concerto you are indeed a devoted disciple of modern music. Repeated hearings of the work will not necessarily clarify its meaning; rather it takes a period of association with many works of the modern schools to begin to bring this one into focus. We would not doubt that such music will be easier to grasp a decade or two from now. While the Berg and Schönberg concertos were written within a year of each other, Berg's is easier to grasp. This recording of the Berg is the 78 rpm version issued previously; the Schönberg is a new issue. The adventurous music lover will find this a rewarding disc, for it contains what may well be the high points of this type of composition, at least in the case of Schönberg.

The Shostakovich *Piano Concerto* is an example of how a work takes on a different hue as time passes.

This is enjoyable and easy to take these days—in some quarters regarded as superficial for about these same reasons. It receives a sparkling performance from the able pianist, Menahem Pressler, and from the veteran trumpeter Harry Glantz. Mr. Pressler devotes the other side of the disc to the first phonographic edition of the *Piano Sonata No. 2* by the same composer. This is large-scale work with a lot of depth and drama woven through it—a work worthy of serious study by those concerned with contemporary music. We were rather surprised at the scope and content of the opus and impressed by all of it. Reproduction of both sides is excellent.

Glère's *Horn Concerto*, published last year, might have been written by any competent composer in the last hundred years. It is completely lacking in any qualities of originality, distinction, or profile—except that it is easy to listen to. It is just music, and it is played by Polekh in just that same manner. The other three items are of varying interest but result in nothing unusual or exceptional. All of this music is played and recorded with less than the sheen that we demand on this side of the Atlantic. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488.** Marcelle Meyer (piano) with the Hewitt Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-88) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 12 in A, K. 414. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 18 in B-flat, K. 456.** Lili Kraus (piano) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1783) \$5.72.

Mozart: Concerto No. 11 in F, K. 413. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 22 in E-flat, K. 482.** Vivian Rivkin (piano) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Dean Dixon. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5244) \$5.95.

Two of the most popular, most melodious, and loveliest of the Mozart piano concertos are paired on the Haydn Society disc. Because of their popularity and charm they have had some previous recordings by artists of more international renown than Marcelle Meyer, although the recordings do not offer such a choice coupling. No. 20 is spread over two 12" sides by Columbia, although Serkin and Ormandy provide one of the best recordings of the music. No. 23, with one exception, is available only with non-Mozart works as couplings; thus the present disc is most advantageous from the choice of material, and since the performances are generally good, it can be recommended to most folks as a good investment. For those who know their Mozart rather well, we might suggest hearing the orchestral introduction to the No. 20 before acquiring this record; it is played more slowly than we have ever before heard it, possibly not without reason or good effect, but it is quite different and even disconcerting. The balance of the first movement is inclined to be a little plodding, although the soloist shows plenty of speed and snap in

the rondo finale.

Lili Kraus is a pianist of distinction, known to record collectors for some years as a most reliable artist, particularly in matters of Mozart. Her performance here is up to her usual high standard, and Monteux offers carefully adjusted accompaniments. No. 12 appears for the second time and No. 18 for the third time on LP; neither is exceptional among Mozart piano concertos, except that all Mozart piano concertos are exceptional examples of beautiful form and the cream of eighteenth-century music. Reproduction is very good on this disc.

American artists Vivian Rivkin and Dean Dixon offer the first LP of No. 11 and the fifth of No. 22. The performances are inclined to be a bit calculated; but they are accurate, of good style and clearly reproduced. If it is No. 22 you are after, comparison with Kraus or Serkin may be worth while. S.

Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 622. Ewald Koch (clarinet) with the Chamber Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Herbert Haarth. One side, and **R. Strauss: Concerto in E-flat, Op. 11.** Heinz Lohan (French horn) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Wiesenhütter. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7108) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 21 in C, K. 467. Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Charles Münch. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K. 595.** Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4791) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '49 & June '42).

The Mozart *Clarinet Concerto* is the classic work for that instrument; this is the third LP discing. Reginald Kell's recording may be preferred by some, but most music lovers who want a good recording will find the present one more enjoyable because of far superior reproduction. The clarinet sounds like a different instrument when heard in this revealing wide range reproduction; it has more color and quality and less of a hollow and hoity sound. Ewald Koch performs the work with dexterity and style. The other side of the disc gives us the Strauss *Horn Concerto*, also beautifully played by an obvious master of that difficult instrument. Another LP version is available, played by Dennis Brain (*C-ML-4775), coupled with Strauss' *Oboe Concerto* played by Leon Goossens. If the matter of coupling enters into it, you will get a fine performance of the horn concerto in either case; we think most persons will enjoy the present disc more because of better reproduction. Other than for couplings or artist preference, the Urania disc can be strongly recommended, for it is a fine one.

The Mozart *Concertos Nos. 21 and 27*, as played by Robert Casadesus, present two performances formerly available on single 10" LP's. For pianistic

proWess, Casadesus is easily the equal of the others who have recorded these two works, and his taste and style in Mozart is always exemplary. However, the majority of today's record collectors will do well to consider other LP's of these works, such as the Westminster by Demus and Badura-Skoda which offer better reproduction, to say nothing of Columbia's own recent issue by Horszowski and the Casals Festival Orchestra of No. 27 (*C-ML-4570). S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Wilhelm Backhaus (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-879) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15. Hugo Steurer (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Pflüger. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25.** Helmut Roloff (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by K. Rucht. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-23) \$3.50.

For at least a year we have stated a preference for Horowitz, Serkin, or Curzon over any newcomers in the "Emperor" field. Wilhelm Backhaus is a Beethoven performer of repute, and his reading is bound to find adherents, although we do not feel it dislodges Horowitz or Serkin from their positions. The decision would be even tougher in "Emperor" matters if Kempff's reading (from the complete Decca set) were available separately. Considering the heroic proportions and the sweeping grandeur of this unique concerto, anyone would have a hard time exceeding the power which Horowitz brings to the music, a power which we found fitting. Serkin and Ormandy have a wonderful command of the work which produces an atmosphere and impression eminently right for the music. As strong a Beethoven combination as Backhaus and Krauss are, they do not manage to better Horowitz or Serkin, and in our books do not quite equal them. The reproduction accorded Backhaus is good, but dangerously near the point of too much echo in many spots.

Urania's Request Series of lower-priced LP discs has come forth with some good performances of which this may be classed among the better values. Helmut Roloff recorded the same Mendelssohn concerto (with another orchestra) for Decca (*D-DL-9652), coupled with the Mendelssohn Concerto No. 2. If that coupling appeals to you more, you will also find the reproduction fuller and less strident than the typical Urania brilliance found on the present disc. Roloff handles the Mendelssohn concertos as well as anyone else on LP's. The Beethoven Concerto No. 1 gets a splendid reading by Hugo Steurer, which may not equal Badura-Skoda or the other big guns who have it on LP, but we would hate to take a blindfold test and try to separate one from the other. As usual, the German orchestras are excellent; this disc is a good value. S.

OPERA



Mozart: Bastien und Bastienne (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4835) \$5.95.

Bastienne.....Ilse Hollweg (s)
Bastien.....Walter Kmentt (t)
Colas.....Walter Berry (bs)

Mozart's little half-forgotten opera (or sing-spiel) makes its second LP appearance with this Columbia recording made, presumably in Vienna. Written when Mozart had reached the ripe age of twelve, the piece is, musically speaking, an astonishing one. There are already characteristically Mozartean melodies and an effort was made, albeit a somewhat childish one, at characterization.

This performance does not, however, do justice to the music. Vocally the singers are all competent but there is no attempt made to sing with expression or understanding. The entire affair is approached in an off-hand manner—there is no humor, no lightness of touch. Miss Hollweg is a far too mature and knowing Bastienne, and the use of a tenor voice for Bastien is both questionable from a musical angle and destructive of the pastoral air the opera normally has. The earlier Period (TNR Mar. '51) recording uses an alto with much better effect. Walter Berry, as Colas, is heavy handed, stilted and unimaginative. These same adjectives may also be applied with equal justice to John Pritchard's direction while his orchestra plays in routine fashion. Another drawback to this performance is the very affected manner in which the characters read their lines. The effect is almost grotesque at times.

Columbia supplies only the English text although the opera is sung in German. This is a silly proceeding that is of no use whatsoever in following the music. The recording is good, in fact it is the only thing that is better about this disc than the earlier Period record. And, incidentally, the recording of the older Period performance is still not bad at all.

This writer feels that Columbia has sort of missed the boat with this release; it could have been so much better. *Bastien und Bastienne* is a fine bit of music, worth repeated hearings and worth much more time and effort than were expended on it here. W.

Blow: Venus and Adonis (complete). (Sung in English). Margaret Ritchie (soprano), Gordon Clinton (baritone), Margaret Field-Hyde (soprano) with supporting cast, Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Anthony Lewis, with M. Frecheville (violoncello) and Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*L-OL-50004) \$5.95.

John Blow (1649-1708) is an almost legendary

English composer whose chief claim to fame is that he was Purcell's teacher. His compositions are largely confined to "anthems and services" for the Church.

His one work for the stage, the "Masque for the Entertainment of the King," *Venus and Adonis*, was written, presumably, between December 1680 and August 1687. It has been recorded here for the first time and, again presumably, in the edition prepared by G. E. P. Arkwright in 1902. There is nothing on the label or jacket to identify anything about the work which, incidentally, strikes this writer as a fine example of the almost contemptuous attitude some recording companies have towards their customers.

The soloists in this recording are only fair. Miss Field-Hyde seems out of sympathy with the role of Cupid and consequently does not sing well. The role, to be sure, does not seem well suited to her voice, and some of her obvious unhappiness may stem from that fact. Margaret Ritchie does not sound as well as this writer has heard her in other recordings, but her singing could not be described as poor; it is just not as good as one might expect. Gordon Clinton struggles manfully with the part of Adonis, but the affair just doesn't come off.

Now many of the difficulties could be caused by the text or the music or both. This text is not inspired (to put it charitably) and neither is the performance. Blow's music is difficult to appraise under the circumstances, so perhaps the problem had best be left to the prospective purchaser. Since l'Oiseau-Lyre, via London, offers no explanation and gives no background for the music, and since there are relatively few people in this country who are specialists in early English music, obviously the set must stand or fall on its apparent merits. W.

Massenet: Werther (complete). (Sung in French).

Soloists, Orchestra of Radio Italiana (Turin) and Chorus conducted by Francesco Molinari Pradelli. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-C-1245) \$17.85.

Werther.....Ferruccio Tagliavini (t)
Charlotte.....Pia Tassinari (s)
Albert.....Marcello Cortis (bt)
Sophie.....Vittoria Neviani (s)
The Baliff.....Giuliano Ferrein (bs)
Schmidt.....Tomasso Soley (t)
Johann.....Pier Luigi Latinucci (bt)

The opera *Werther* in its two LP recordings offers some interesting food for thought. The first recording, made in France with French principals (TNR Dec. '53) was found wanting on virtually all counts. Now there is a set made by, ostensibly, more accomplished singers but in Italy where French opera usually does not fare too well. This current recording of *Werther* is, unfortunately, very little, if any, improvement over its predecessor.

Pia Tassinari, who can usually be counted on for a sterling performance, fails to realize the possibili-

ties of the role of Charlotte. Her big scenes, particularly in the third act, are only emotional; it is as though she were standing to one side and watching herself with some distaste. Vocally she does not seem to be at her best, either, for some of her high notes are shrill and unskillfully produced—a most unusual occurrence with this gifted singer.

Ferruccio Tagliavini's vocalization came as a shock to this reviewer. Whatever the causes, he no longer can command any ringing high notes; his best efforts being confined to the *mezza-voce* region. Now, no one can go through an opera *mezza-voce* and when he opens up, as he must in the arias (notably *Pourquoi me réveiller*) the results are lamentable.

Marcello Cortis as Albert and Giuliano Ferrein as the Baliff sing creditably at all times, while Vittoria Neviani has her moments as Sophie. Maestro Pradelli directs in sprightly fashion but is defeated by his soloists' lethargy or lack of understanding.

As was mentioned before, *Werther* must have top-flight, understanding and sympathetic artists in the main roles and at the conductor's desk in order to make any impact at all; and in both LP versions issued thus far these prerequisites have not been met. The recorded sound is passable, being neither exceptionally good nor very bad. A complete libretto, with pictures, is furnished. W.

Rossini: La Scala di Seta (complete). (Sung in Italian). Angelica Tuccari (soprano); Giuseppina Salvi (mezzo-soprano); Piero Besma, Giuseppe Gentile (tenors); Nestore Catalini (baritone); Tito Dolciotti (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of the Societa del Quartetto (Rome) conducted by Giuseppe Morelli. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-591) \$5.95.

Handel: Rodelinda (complete). (Sung in Italian). Friederike Sailer (soprano); Hedwig Lipp (contralto); Frank Fehringer (tenor); Robert Titze (baritone); Walter Hagner, Helmut Lips (basses); Chorus and Orchestra of Sueddeutscher Rundfunk conducted by Muller-Kray. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-589) \$5.95.

Rossini's little one act *farsa* called *La Scala di Seta* (*The Silken Ladder*) was first produced on May 9, 1812. One wonders if there are any reasons, other than the obvious historical ones, for reviving it on records. That Rossini thought little of it is evidenced by the note he wrote the producer, Cera. It would seem that Cera was distrustful of the twenty year old Rossini's ability and gave him the worst libretto he had and, Rossini being aware of this, was not inclined to take much trouble with it. He later wrote Cera as follows:

"My dear Fellow:

"In making me write music for the libretto called *La Scala di Seta*, you treated me like a boy, and I, in turning out a failure only paid you back in kind. So now we're quits."

With the above information and a cast of only

average singers the present disc does not offer much in the way of artistic enjoyment. Morelli's direction does not make up for any of the work's lack of merit nor does the somewhat muddy recording enhance the whole affair. Better hear this one first.

Quite a different matter, chronologically, if not artistically, is this recorded version of Handel's *Rodelinda*. *Rodelinda* was all the rage when it was first performed in February 1725 but has been little more than a name for two centuries. Of the almost insurmountable difficulties of performing Handelian opera there is not space for discussion here. The chief objection on this writer's part to the present disc lies in the fact that one is left completely in the dark as to editing, arrangement, etc. One is presented with a *fait accompli* in the form of a 12" LP disc entitled *Rodelinda*, and that is that.

The singers vary from good to bad—Friederike Sailer sings very beautifully, with feeling and a sense of style. On the other hand Helmut Lips, as Garibaldo, sounds as if he had a bad cold. The other singers fall between these two extremes.

One has a feeling that the work has been "arranged" quite a bit but in the absence of a score or any information on the jacket, it must stand or fall on its apparent merits. This writer, who bows to none in his admiration for Handel, found it boring.

W.

CHORAL



Berlioz: L'Enfance du Christ, Op. 25 (complete). (Sung in French). Mary Davenport (contralto), Martial Singher (baritone), Leopold Simoneau (tenor), Donald Gramm (bass), the Choral Art Society and the Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-199) \$11.90.

This reviewer cannot remember when a set of records gave him such a hard time as this new Columbia recording of Berlioz' *L'Enfance du Christ*. In addition, since he is an old Berliozian from way back (1926 to be exact), his natural inclination would be to praise the new issue to the skies. Imagine then, his consternation on playing these records and having to go back to the earlier Vox set to check and make sure these people were performing the same music!

Much of the fault undoubtedly lies at the door of Thomas Scherman for his heavy handed and plodding direction. A complete lack of imagination is the outstanding feature of the performance which is, consequently, dull and, as noted above, so different from what one had expected. One should bear in mind, too, that Cluytens, who directs the Vox recording, is not exactly a "ball of fire." The magnificent nocturnal march at the opening of the work misses fire completely, and the subsequent portions of the marvelous score are prodded along in a manner that must be due, to put a charitable interpretation on it, to a complete misunderstanding of Berlioz' intentions.

The soloists also leave a great deal to be desired.

Whoever sings the role of Herod (it is either Gramm or Singher, one suspects the latter) does so in a wobbly voice that does not add much to the success of the matter in hand. Miss Davenport sings best but, unfortunately, this isn't saying much. Simoneau does the part of the Narrator, and to him falls one of the plums of the score, *Le Répos de la Sainte Famille*, which he fails to bring off, either due to Scherman's lack of imagination or to his own—possibly a combination of both.

The recording is pretty good but not as much better than the Vox set (TNR Dec. '52) as one has reason to expect. The notes are excellent being, as they are, excerpts from Barzun's *Berlioz and the Romantic Century*. No libretto is supplied and, in view of the set's dedication to the American Berlioz Society, Inc., this is hard to understand. All in all the recording, singing, performance and packaging are a genuine disappointment.

W.

Delius: A Mass of Life. (Sung in German). Rosina Raisbeck (soprano), Monica Sinclair (contralto), Charles Craig (tenor), Bruce Boyce (baritone), London Philharmonic Choir and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-197) \$11.90.

Recorded under the auspices of the Delius Trust, December 1952, *A Mass of Life* brings to discs for the first time what many consider Delius' most imposing work. Delius was completely devoted to, sold on, taken in by, or however you wish to describe it, Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche's creed was Delius' creed once he got hold of it. Charles Burr, Columbia's annotator, devotes several pages to quotations from other commentators on the meaning of the poem "Thus Spake Zarathustra," from which Delius selected passages that make up the text of this work. There are also comments on Nietzsche's and Delius' philosophy, and other related matters, all of which we have neither the space, the knowledge, nor the desire to discuss. We will begin with the fact that a musical composition exists, titled *A Mass of Life*, written by Delius. The music is a far more serious and searching composition than the setting by Richard Strauss. The exotic harmonic idiom of Delius is ideally suited to such a subject as he chose, and those who know of Delius' choral and vocal writing can expect much of the same in this work, except that it has a weight and intensity of unusual dimension. Without bothering to read the English translation of the words (and many will prefer not to get mixed up in what they feel is drivel in thought, if good poetry) one can sit back and soak up the most gorgeous succession of musical ideas, deftly woven with subtle harmonies as only Delius seemed to conjure. Musically, this is certainly one of history's richest tapestries.

Anyone but Sir Thomas Beecham conducting this work would be unthinkable, for among all living conductors, none could match him in revealing the magic

of a Delius score. He works his usual alchemy with this work, drawing solo passages and blending choirs of the orchestra in a remarkable manner. He elicits from the soloists and the chorus performances of equal stature. Those who have come under the spell of Delius' music will not want to miss this masterful album, a whole festival in itself. S.

Monteverdi: Vespro della Beata Vergine et Magnificat. (Sung in Latin). Margaret Ritchie, Elsie Morison (sopranos); William Herbert, Richard Lewis (tenors); Bruce Boyce (baritone); The London Singers and Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Anthony Lewis, with Geraint Jones (organ) and Ruggero Gerlin (harpsichord). 2-12" discs in box (*L-OL-50021/2) \$11.90.

Monteverdi: Madrigals for Five Voices (Bk I, complete). (Sung in Italian). Roger Wagner Madrigal Singers conducted by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-43) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Ch'io ami la mia vita; Se per havervi oime; A che tormi il ben mio; Amor per tua mercede; Baci soavi e cari; Se pur non ti contenti; Fili Cara e amata; Poi che del mio dolore; Fumia la pastorella; Almo divino raggio; All' hora i pastori tutti; Se nel partir da voi; Tra mille fiamme; Usciam ninfe homai; Questa ordi il laccio; La vaga pastorella; Amor s'il tuo ferire; Donna d'io miro voi; Ardo si ma non t'amo; Ardi o gela; Arsi e alsì.*

Back in June 1953 these columns carried a review of Monteverdi's *Vespro della Beata Vergine* as recorded by Vox. At that time it was stated that the recording and performance were excellent—how excellent this writer did not fully realize until he heard this highly publicized version on l'Oiseau-Lyre.

To begin with, the edition used here is different from that employed by Hans Grischakt and his forces—so different, in fact, that the two scarcely sound alike. The soloists here are adequate, for the most part, but in some instances there is tenor trouble. Frankly, it seemed to this writer either that none of the artists from conductor on down (or up, which ever way one cares to look at it) found the material sympathetic (which is unlikely) or they failed to grasp its inner meaning, for this performance by Anthony Lewis and his associates does not do justice to Monteverdi's grand and moving score.

The recording is good, but coarser (recorded at a higher volume level) than the Vox set. Those who own the earlier discs need have no fears, while others who might be interested in having the music in their collections should, perhaps, hear both. This newer set, incidentally, is innocent of all notes although the text is printed on the jackets. This parsimony is inexcusable.

The collection of Monteverdi madrigals on the Lyrichord disc (Book I, 1587) are of interest, but here too one has the feeling that the performances lack the sympathy and understanding so necessary

for the vital projection of the music. The Roger Wagner Madrigal Singers (a group of six voices) are well trained and have intrinsically fine voices. For the reasons suggested above, however, the disc does not "come off."

Lyrichord naively assumes all those interested in the record also have a knowledge of Italian for they print the texts without any translation. The recording is nicely accomplished. W.

Catholic Hymns. Choir of Old St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, directed by the Rev. Eugene A. Walsh, S. S., with James M. Burns (organ). 1-12" disc (*BOSTON B-601) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *O God of Loveliness; Crown Him with Many Crowns; To Jesus' Heart All Burning; Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All; Jesus, Gentlest Saviour; Holy God, We Praise Thy Name; Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star; Ave Maria; Regina Caeli Jubila; Tota Pulchra es, Maria; Christus Vincit; Doxology.*

When we first saw this LP disc listed for release we hoped that we might recommend it without any qualification because there is a wide demand for recordings of such Catholic hymns as are contained on it. The Choir of Old St. Mary's Seminary is a well-trained group and sings these favorite hymns with a high regard for their sacred significance. If you know these selections, you will be pleased with these renditions; but we must warn you that the reproduction throughout is not good—in fact, we would say that it is poor. This disc was probably made from tapes that were recorded in the Seminary at Baltimore. It is our opinion that the technicians who made the tapes were not very successful in securing good recordings.

Bach: Mass in B minor (complete). (Sung in Latin). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano), Marga Höffgen (contralto), Nicolai Gedda (tenor), Heniz Reh-fuss (bass) with Chorus and Orchestra of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Vienna) conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35015/7TP) \$14.85. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3500C) \$17.85.

This present recording of Bach's *B Minor Mass* is, by and large, a sterling job. As has been pointed out previously, in a work of such magnitude it is virtually impossible to achieve a performance that will meet all its towering requirements. If at times this presentation seems to lack energy and impetus, it is because the artists are only human.

The soloists are all first class and they sing with expression and clarity. The choral work is executed with precision and tonal accuracy, while the orchestral parts, as one might expect, are played with every regard for style and effect.

The chief competition for this set is the exemplary Westminster performance under Dr. Scherchen. Though now over three years old, it still seems to be the best available. With the present Angel re-

lease, as so often happens on records, there is something missing; the spark, a certain "get up and go," call it what you will, that makes a performance come to life, is not in evidence. Perhaps it is just a personal idiosyncrasy—looking for something that doesn't exist. Nonetheless, the writer prefers Scherchen's performance—it has more drama, more fire.

As the reader can readily gather, this is beginning to boil down to: 1) if you have the Westminster set, relax, it has still not been too seriously challenged, and, 2) if you are in the market for the *Mass in B Minor* by all means hear both recordings.

The recording, from a technical standpoint, is quite satisfactory but it does not show the improvement over the Westminster version one would expect considering the improvements brought about in the last three years. The factory sealed package has very informative notes on the work as well as the text and translation. W.

Rossini: Messe solennelle. (Sung in Latin). Angelica Tuccari (soprano), Giuseppina Salvi (mezzo-soprano), Piero Besma (tenor), Nestore Catalani (baritone), Chorus and Orchestra Sinfonica Romana della "Societa del Quartetto" conducted by Albertico Vitalini. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-588) \$5.95.

"Dear God—Well, this poor little Mass is completed. Have I for once written real Sacred Music or merely very bad music? I was born for *opera buffa*, as Thou knowest! Little skill, but some heart; that about sums it up. So blessed be Thou, and grant me Paradise."

This extraordinary note was written by Rossini on the last page of the *Petit Messe solennelle* (to give the piece its proper title) in 1863. It, perhaps, more than anything else, shows Rossini with his guard down and thus the *Mass* can be taken as "a kind of challenge to God and man to recognize his peculiar temperament for what it was and at that to take it or leave it." (Toye).

Musically the *Petit Messe solennelle* is a superior work, a genuine outpouring of Rossini's inner spirit. It was first performed privately by a small group of singers accompanied by two pianos and a harmonium. Among the guests were Meyerbeer (who was quite overcome by the piece), Auber and Thomas. Later, Rossini somewhat reluctantly orchestrated it because, as he said, someone else would after his death, in fact, he added, "it might even be handed over to the tender mercies of M. Sax and his saxophones!"

So much for the work's origin. This first recording, while it gives one an idea of the genius of the composer and his wonderful melodies, is far from indicating what effect could be made with more accomplished musicians. The soloists are only fair, lacking spirit and the proper sense of style, while the chorus and orchestra also lack distinction. The recording is below standard, sounding dull and, at times, distant.

Even so, the reader is encouraged to hear this recording of the *Petit Messe solennelle* for the work is not only great art, it is the spiritual ancestor of many later works, notably Verdi's great *Requiem*. W.

Mozart: Requiem Mass, K. 626. Magda Laszlo (soprano); Hilde Roessel-Majdan (contralto); Petre Munteanu (tenor); Richard Standen (bass); the Akademie Kammerchor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5233) \$5.95.

In looking back over the almost six years of microgroove recording one of its outstanding aspects has been the work of Dr. Hermann Scherchen for Westminster. To be sure, not everything he has done has been received with unreserved praise, but his average is extraordinarily high. He has covered a wide field of music, from Bach and Mozart to Berlioz and Prokofiev and, at no time, can he be said to have given a poor performance, even though one may have differed with his ideas on a given work. One outstanding attitude of Dr. Scherchen's deserves mention and that is his obvious interest in recording—this characteristic of his goes a long way towards making his recordings both good music and good art.

This new recording of the Mozart *Requiem* is another successful musical venture from which Dr. Scherchen emerges with increased stature. The conception is a dramatic one, almost theatrical—but this writer for one, can find no fault with his manner of presentation. The soloists are all top-flight, even Petre Munteanu sings and sounds well. The always excellent and well trained Vienna Kammerchor do yeoman work. As is usual in a Scherchen performance, tempi are strictly observed and everyone is on his toes. Expression is achieved and a noteworthy performance is the result.

The genesis of the *Requiem* is too well known to require discussion here; it is only necessary to point out that only the first two movements were written out by Mozart, although the work can be honestly said to be his creation. Süßmayr, working in supposedly strict accordance with Mozart's wishes, completed the piece which, while it made a "complete" work available, is certainly not the same as if Mozart had lived to finish it.

Text and notes (good ones) are supplied by Westminster who seldom, if ever, disappoint the purchaser in this respect. The sound is fine. W.

Britten: A Ceremony of Carols. (Sung in English). Copenhagen Boys' Choir conducted by Benjamin Britten, with Enid Simon (harp). 1-10" disc (*LLD-9102) \$2.95.

London Records is making a real play for a larger segment of the record dollar and has come up with a pretty smart scheme to achieve its aims. Briefly it intends to issue a number of ten inch records by its best artists containing music that ordinarily would

occupy one side of a twelve inch disc. In this way the purchaser will not need to worry about an odd side. Should the disc happen to contain two selections, he will have, at worst, only a ten inch side of something he doesn't like; in short, only \$1.50's worth, not \$3. This new (really not new with London, just refurbished) series will feature complete art work, notes, etc. just as the more expensive discs—apparently the \$4.95 10" recording (always overpriced, this writer felt) is a thing of the past.

The present recording of Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* is the opening gun (although there have been a few notable predecessors such as the Strauss *Four Last Songs*). This is a delightful and authentic performance. The decision to use the magnificent Copenhagen Boys' Choir directed by the composer was a happy one. The results are just about what one would expect—superb in every respect.

For those not acquainted with the work, it is a setting of some old English Carols by Benjamin Britten, but written in the manner of the Middle Ages. The use of boys' voices (neither of the two earlier recordings did this) is a touch of genius.

The recorded sound is fine. The young soloists are delightful, and the piece emerges as the truly inspired conception that it is.

London Records is to be congratulated on a genuine forward step, and it is this reviewer's earnest hope that the new series will receive the support it deserves. W.

Foss: A Parable of Death. Vera Zorina (narrator), Farrold Stevens (tenor), Choir of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Louisville Orchestra conducted by Robert Whitney. One side, and **Martinu: Intermezzo.** And **Milhaud: Kentuckiana** (Divertissement on 20 Kentucky Airs). Louisville Orchestra conducted by Robert Whitney. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4859) \$5.95.

A Parable of Death and *Kentuckiana* were commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra. Certainly we can hardly imagine two works any more different than these. In *A Parable of Death*, the young composer, Lukas Foss (born in 1922), has accomplished a most difficult task. He has produced a narrative with music that holds the interest from the beginning to the end without its being overly dramatic. Here is a work that, after one has listened to it, he has the urge to hear again. There are two primary reasons for this. Mr. Foss has gone to great pains to select a text that is highly suitable for such a composition; and, secondly, he has been successful in supplying it with an interesting and appropriate choral and orchestral background. The text was taken from *Geschichten vom lieben Gott* by the Austrian poet, Rainer Maria Rilke. The English version used in this recording is by Anthony Hecht. The story, very briefly, is that of a man and a woman who are very much in love, and realizing that Death is not a stranger, they are willing to take him as a silent and knowing partner while they are still on this earth.

The very beautiful and talented Vera Zorina's reading of the narrative is a work of art that, through its simplicity and transparent beauty, holds one spell-bound. Miss Zorina is ably supported by a fine chorus and orchestra under the sympathetic direction of Robert Whitney.

Milhaud's *Kentuckiana* is a lusty piece built on some twenty Kentucky folk tunes. The composer often uses several of them at the same time. No danger of going to sleep when the orchestra is playing this one. The best we can say for it is that it is loud and lively.

Between these two commissioned pieces will be found Martinu's *Intermezzo*, a rather pleasing modern work consisting of gay dance rhythms with a Slavonic tang. R.

Les Compagnons de la Chanson. Les Compagnons de la Chanson. 1-10" disc (*ANG-ABL-64000) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Moulin rouge; C'etait mon copain; La Prière; I Believe; Comme un p'tit coquelicot; Quelque part . . . deux amants; La Chanson du Celibataire; The Galley Slave.*

A Song at Twilight. De Paur Infantry Chorus conducted by Leonard de Paur. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-42) \$2.85.

CONTENTS: *Love's Old Sweet Song; The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi; You'll Never Walk Alone; Sweet and Low; The Whiffenpoof Song; Danny Boy.*

Les Compagnons de la Chanson, a fine group of young male French singers, have been greeted by enthusiastic audiences wherever they have appeared. In addition to their concert appearances they have been heard by thousands and thousands of Americans via television and radio; therefore, we presume that the present disc will enjoy wide popularity. It contains several of their best liked French songs together with a couple of numbers sung in English.

The de Paur Infantry Chorus, a group of well-trained Negro male singers, has selected a number of songs with a wide general appeal. Perhaps you will like these renditions; we thought the melodies were dragged out to the point where the songs lacked any meaning.

VOCAL

Schubert Songs. One side, and **Schumann Songs.**

Herta Glaz (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Leo Mueller (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3055) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Dem Unendlichen; Erlafsee; Im Walde; Der Wachtelschlag; Die Liebe hat gelogen; Ellens zweiter Gesang; Meeresstille; Im Grünen (Schubert). Im Wald; Die letzten Blumen starben; Die Spinnerin; Die Soldatenbraut; Ich wand're nicht; Melancholie; Aufträge; Erstes Grün; Zwei Zigeunerlieder (Schumann).*

MGM has come up with one of the nicest recorded

lieder recitals that have come this way in a long time. It seems almost incredible that nearly sixteen years have elapsed since Miss Glaz made a recording of two Schubert *lieder* for RCA Victor, yet such is the case. In that time she has matured artistically and her art, as demonstrated on this disc, is that of a fine musician. Her voice is still the same warm, well produced mezzo that is handled with uncommon intelligence. Her phrasing and diction show considerable care, and yet she is a sufficiently accomplished singer so that the actual mechanics of voice production never interfere with what, for want of a better word, one must call her interpretations. These, incidentally, are of a high order, being notable for a genuine expressiveness, the result of an insight into both poetry and music that one seldom encounters in these days of the veriest minimum amount of training.

One must also offer congratulations on the choice of material. The Schubert *lieder* were of particular interest to this writer, for many of them were new to him. The first is supposed to be well known ("It has even suffered orchestration" wrote Dr. Einstein) but it was new to this listener. It is a very fine song, somewhat similar to the more famous *Die Allmacht* but even better. *Erlafsee*, in addition to being a charming song, has the added distinction of being the first of Schubert's *lieder* to be printed and published. *Ellens zweite Gesang* ("Jäger ruhe von der Jägd") is one of seven settings of Scott's poems and is every whit as charming as the more familiar *Ave Maria* ("Jungfrau mild") which is, by the way, Ellen's third song.

The Schumann songs are also well chosen but lack, for this writer, the poetic imagination and charm that came to Schubert so naturally—these of Schumann, while little gems, have a contrived air about them—but then, perhaps one should have played them first.

The accompaniments of Leo Mueller are models of good taste; the German-English texts are supplied, and the reproduction is good.

Schönberg: The Book of the Hanging Gardens, Op. 15. Belva Kibler (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Gehard Albersheim (piano). 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-42) \$5.95.

This song cycle consisting of musical settings to fifteen short poems by Stefan George dates from 1907-08. While little of this music is heard today, the work is of prime importance in the musical progress of the composer. A clear change from the classical style is perceptible in this work. The whole-tone scale and its chords make their appearance and Schönberg has arrived at "atonality."

The present recording is an excellent one. Belva Kibler is noted for her interest in contemporary music, and her rendition of this Schönberg song cycle was so successful in Los Angeles that it was repeated several times at subsequent concerts for even more enthusiastic audiences. Lyrichord was thoughtful enough to supply the German texts of all

of these little songs together with English translations and has supplied most faithful reproduction.

Songs and Ballads of America's Wars (from the French and Indian War to the Civil War). Frank Warner (vocal). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-13) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: The French & Indian War: *Felix the Soldier, The Press Gang Sailor, The Ballad of Montcalm and Wolfe*; The American Revolution: *Doodle Dandy, Paul Jones, The British Soldier*; War of 1812: *Perry's Victory*; Civil War (North): *The Battle-Cry of Freedom, The Twenty-Third, Virginia's Bloody Soil*; Civil War (South): *The Southern Girl's Reply, An Old Unreconstructed, The Bonnie Blue Flag*.

Turkish and Spanish Folk Songs. Cynthia Gooding (vocal). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-6) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *Sakarya; Ankarinin Tasina Bak; Eminem; Katip; Ak Koyun; Yahsi Meral; Donde vas Rey Alfonsito; Tres Moricas & Anda Diciendo tu Madre; Conde Olinos; Ay, un Galan; Eres Alta y Delgada & La Molinera*.

Mexican Folk Songs. Cynthia Gooding (vocal). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-8) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *Rosita Alvarez; Arreo; La Llorona; La Bamba; El Tecolote; El Palo Verde; General Felipe Angeles; Roman Castillo; Lucrecia; La Voltereta*.

There Was a Little Tree (American Folk Songs for Children). Shep Ginandes (vocal). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-7) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *There Was a Little Tree; I Went Up on the Mountain Top; The Monkey's Wedding; Billie Boy; I Bought Me a Cat; Froggie Went a-Courting; Oh, But I Won't Have Him; Ground Hog; Who Will Shoe My Little Foot; The Mare*.

Folk Blues. Sonny Terry (vocals & mouth harp) accompanied by Alec Stewart (guitar). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-14) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *The Fox Chase; Talking About the Blues; Goodbye Leadbelly; Red River; John Henry; Mama Told Me; Moaning and Mourning Blues; In the Evening*.

The Elektra-Stratford Record Corp. is building quite an extensive library of folk recordings and issuing them under the "Elektra" label. Five of its recent releases are listed above. The space available does not permit our considering them in any detail, but we can report that the reproduction throughout is of excellent quality and that the artists have been selected with great care and are specialists in their particular fields. A leaflet listing the "Elektra" records to date is available and will be sent gratis to all who request it as long as our present supply lasts.

Songs of Parisian Nights. Germaine Montero (mezzo-soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7005) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Le Fille de Londres; La Chanson de Margaret; Belleville—Menilmontant; Tha-Ma-Ra-Boum-Dee-Hé; En Sortant de l'Ecole; Chanson pour les Enfants, l'Hiver; Et la Fête Continue; Et puis après; Les Enfants qui s'Aiment.*

A Continental Cocktail. Liane (vocal) with the Boheme Bar Trio. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7002) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Où est tu, mon amour?; Madrid; Ich hab mich so an dich gewöhnt; Hello, wer ist dort an der Tür?; Polka; Warum has du mir weh getan?; Melodies of Old Vienna; Padam . . . Padam; Would I Love You?; Spanish Dance.*

Germaine Montero and Liane are both well known to the devotees of the night spots in present-day Paris. On this pair of discs they present a series of songs that are typical of this type of entertainment. A knowledge of Parisian French will be helpful to a full appreciation of these ditties which are not intended for students of French in a young ladies seminary.

ORGAN



Widor: Symphony No. 9, Op. 70 ("Gothique"). Clarence Watters playing the organ at Trinity College Chapel, Hartford (Conn.). One side, and **Widor: Symphony No. 10, Op. 73 ("Romane").** William Self, playing the organ at All Saints Church, Worcester (Mass.). 2-12" discs in folder (*CLAS-CE-1012) \$11.90.

Widor's symphonies for organ number eight, plus the two works known as the "Gothique" and the "Romane." These two final symphonies of Widor represent the composer in his last and finest period of writing. Dating from the early 1890's, they bear opus numbers 70 and 73; the last of the numbered symphonies were those of Opus 42, the earlier one carrying Opus 13. The *Gothic Symphony* bears the inscription "In memory of Saint Ouen of Rouen." It was inspired by the Gothic church of St. Ouen of Rouen and is based upon the Gregorian melody of the Christmas hymn, "Puer natus est nobis," the famous Introit for Christmas Day. The *Roman Symphony* bears an inscription similar to that of the Gothic, but to Saint Sernin of Toulouse. And, like its predecessor, it is inspired by the architecture of a noble church, the Roman church of St. Sernin in Toulouse, which is called the finest example of this style in France. The *Roman Symphony* has for its subject the Easter hymn "This Day." All of this factual information is from the informative jacket notes accompanying these records.

Each of these four-movement works occupies two sides, and they are pressed in automatic sequence, so that it is unnecessary to turn the disc even if you

wish to play but one of the works, a convenient arrangement. That these two are housed in the same album is rather obviously logical, for although they are not connected, they have much in common. Of the two, the *Roman* is the more imposing work, capped with a colossal finale. William Self is well schooled in the French style and plays this work in a convincing manner, although without any superficial flourishes. The organ in All Saints was designed by Mr. Self and G. Donald Harrison and is in the French tradition; its stoplist is on the jacket, a nice habit with Classic Editions. Clarence Watters, by now familiar to organ record collectors, offers his usual sterling performance on the fine Trinity College organ. It is interesting to note that both of these works come to a quiet close after an eloquent and elaborate build-up in the finales. This superb album, a rare treat for organ lovers, is another result of the miracle of LP.

S.

PIANO



Bach: Prelude and Fugue No. 32 in E-flat (from "Das Wohltemperierte Clavier," Bk. 2). And **Bach: English Suite No. 3 in G minor.** One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 8 in A minor, K. 310.** And **Mozart: Rondo in D, K. 485.** Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-756) \$5.95.

Bach: Goldberg Variations. Joerg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5241) \$5.95.

A Bach Recital. Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-791) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor; Nun komm' der Helden Heiland* (Organ Prelude—trans. Kempff); *Cantata No. 147—Jesu, joy of man's desiring*; (3) *Organ Preludes* ("Befiehl du deine Wege," "In dulci jubilo," and "Nun freut euch, liebe Christen g'mein"); *Flute Sonata No. 2 in E-flat—Siciliano*; *Cantata No. 140—Wachet auf.*

Most if not all of the keyboard music on these three discs is already available in adequate LP recordings, and thus their release is not of prime importance. Of particular interest to us, however, was the Bach recordings by Wilhelm Kempff. Somehow we have never associated Kempff with Bach; with Brahms, Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann but not Bach. We were pleasantly impressed with his present Bach recordings—they were simple, straightforward and without the slightest trace of any straining for effects. Kempff gave us Bach keyboard music as we like it; perhaps you will like it too.

Music for Two Pianos: 1900-1952. Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale (duo-pianists). 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-198) \$17.85.

CONTENTS: *Concerto for Two Pianos* (Stravinsky); *Sonata for Four Hands* (Hindemith); *Suite Champêtre* (Rieti); *Concertino d'Automne* (Milhaud) (with instrumental accompaniment conducted

by Daniel Saidenberg); *En Habit de Cheval* (Satie); (6) *Epigraphes antiques* (Debussy); *Sonate for Piano Four Hands* (Poulenc); *Souvenirs*, Op. 28 (Barber); *Sonata for Two Pianos* (Haieff).

The famous international duo-pianists, Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, who are particularly noted for their interest in contemporary music for two pianos, have selected some of the best music in that field to appear since the turn of the century. We believe that the discerning music lover will be highly pleased with the pieces they have chosen and with their performances of them. This set of discs will doubtless have a limited appeal, but for those who are interested it will have a mighty strong one.

Schumann: Die Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6. One side, and **Schumann: Papillons, Op. 2.** Joerg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5232) \$5.95.

Schumann: Die Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6. Adrian Aeschbacher (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7531) \$3.85.

Schumann: Die Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6. Joseph Battista (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGME-3011) \$4.85.

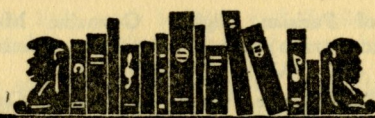
Schumann: Impromptus on a Theme by Clara Wieck, Op. 5. And **Schumann: Abegg-Variationen in F, Op. 1.** One side, and **Schumann: Papillons, Op. 2.** And **Schumann: Toccata in C, Op. 7.** Andor Földes (piano). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10122) \$4.85.

Schumann: Faschingsschwank aus Wien, Op. 26. One side, and **Brahms: Waltzes, Op. 39.** Robert Weisz (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-798) \$5.95.

A flock of recordings of Schumann's keyboard music recently arrived at the studio and all of it to be found on the five discs listed above is already available on LP records except the two pleasing, but unimportant little pieces, *Impromptus on a Theme by Clara Wieck, Op. 5* and *Abegg-Variationen in F, Op. 1*. Lack of space permits us to merely list these for our readers information.

Shostakovich: Sonata No. 2 in B minor, Op. 64. Menahem Pressler (piano). One side, and **Shostakovich: Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and Strings, Op. 35.** Menahem Pressler (piano) and Harry Glantz (trumpet) with the MGM Orchestra conducted by Theodore Bloomfield. 1-12" disc (*MGME-3079) \$4.85.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capital, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Poly-music, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.

∅ indicates 45 rpm.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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IN the 78 rpm days Columbia issued a series of recordings known as Add-A-Part records. These recordings were mostly chamber works made with one instrument missing, and with them was supplied a score so that one could add the missing part and play along with the record. When LP records came along, this whole series of Add-A-Part discs was discontinued.

Now Classic Editions is beginning another such series on LP discs. This series is called "Music Minus One," or MMO for short. It is a great advantage to have such recordings on LP discs because there is no break in a movement of a work. With the previous 78 rpm Add-A-Part discs the player would just be going nicely when all of a sudden the music would stop, and he would have to get up and turn over the disc to play a bit more of the same movement.

At present such works in the MMO series are available: Schubert: *Piano Quintet in A, Op. 114* ("The Trout"); Mozart: *Quintet for Piano and Winds, K. 452*; Beethoven: *Quintet for Piano and Winds, Op. 16*; Schumann: *Piano Quintet in E-flat, Op. 44*; Mozart: *Clarinet Quintet in A major, K. 581*. The price of these discs is \$5.95 each, and the scores for instruments other than piano are 75¢ each; piano scores are \$1.25 each. A catalog giving record numbers and additional information is available gratis from the publishers of this bulletin.

In addition to such chamber works as listed above, MMO is making available two LP discs and a book for those who are interested in the recorder, or "English Flute." The interest in this instrument has grown immensely in recent years, and we believe that this disc and book will fill a long felt need. The book is by Dr. Erich Katz, Musical Director of the American Recorder Society, and contains instructions for playing the recorder, which are illustrated

on the discs, together with some sixty folksongs of many countries, all in polyphonic two-part settings. The price of the book is \$2.50 and the records are \$5.95 each. As we said, there are two records, one with the alto recorder missing and one with the soprano recorder missing. In ordering you should specify which disc you desire. The book contains the scores for both instruments.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-two years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning June 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: *Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68* ("Pastoral"). Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Erich Kleiber. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-916) \$5.95.

Schubert: *Symphony No. 8 in B minor* ("Unfinished"). One side, and Schubert: *Symphony No. 4 in C minor* ("Tragic"). The Hewitt Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-89) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17* ("Little Russian"). Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra conducted by Nathan Rachlin. One side, and Liadov: (8) *Russian Folk Songs, Op. 58*. Youth Symphony Orchestra of the Moscow Philharmonic conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*A-440-AC-1204) \$5.95.

With this batch of discs we find some oft-recorded and some less familiar repertoire. In the former category could be listed the Beethoven "Pastoral,"

the latest recording of which we recently praised in these columns—Beecham (*C-ML-4828). There are now so many disc versions of this work, including many recent high fidelity recordings, that a comparison review would run into several columns. Standing on its own merits, the present set is mighty good, with dependable Kleiber and the fine Amsterdam Orchestra giving a reading without excesses, with full justice to the score, and with alert playing. The reproduction is excellent, with an especially rich bass. This is one of the better "Pastoral" records for anyone wishing to make comparisons.

With the Schubert "Unfinished" we have a work that is approaching the dozen and a half mark for LP recordings, with many different styles of interpretation represented. The current effort, while not by one of the world's most celebrated ensembles, is a beautiful statement of the music. If it errs, it is in the direction of being a little too diligent in seeking out the various threads and strands of the score, with the result that some of the warp and woof shows through where we would prefer to see (hear) just the picture. Revealing inner voices and parts is often thrilling as well as different; but sometimes it is better not to have the supports and structural members showing. Nevertheless, our final impression was that this is a worthy performance; and the same is true for the good reading of the "Tragic."

Tchaikovsky's infrequently performed *Symphony No. 2* receives a good, solid reading, competent performance, and a fairly good reproduction which is not measurably better than the Mitropoulos version now in the catalogs (*C-ML-4252). The bonus, however, is the charming set of miniatures appearing for the first time on LP, Liadov's *Eight Russian Folk Songs*, although the reproduction accorded them is on the dull side. These gems weigh more than they should and lack the brilliance they deserve. S.

Ravel: Daphnis and Chloé Suites Nos. 1 & 2. L'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française with Chorale Marcel Briclot conducted by André Cluytens. One and one-half sides, and **Ravel: Alborada del Gracioso.** L'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35054TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35054) \$5.95.

Saint-Saëns: (4) Symphonic Poems. L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Colonne conducted by Louis Fourester. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35058TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35058) \$5.95.

French music, performed right on the scene, as it were, is a feature of these two exquisitely packaged Angel Records. Unfortunately there would appear to be a dearth of top-flight conductors in France. All we seem to have are Cluytens, Fourester, Leibowitz and Ansermet (who is a Swiss). Of this group, excepting Ansermet, only Leibowitz is first class; the other two are routine performers at best.

The Ravel disc features music that has been recorded many times before; and while this recording is one of the best Angel records this writer has heard, it has been equalled or surpassed from a technical standpoint. Cluytens has nothing to add to Ravel from an interpretive angle; in fact Ansermet and Ormandy, both with better orchestras, may be considered to have said the last word on this music.

The Saint-Saëns disc is a disappointment all along the line. The music, never profound, is handled in summary fashion by Fourester. Under such treatment the music wilts and dies. *La Jeunesse d'Hercule* meanders along, getting nowhere; the *Danse Macabre* sounds like a jolly gathering of friendly spooks; *Phaëton* and *Le Rouet d'Omphale* are equally moribund. Now, a great deal of the dullness may be due to the technical deficiencies of the recording. The sound is distant, lacking in both definition and brilliance, certainly well below present day standards.

To sum up then, both discs can be said to bring nothing to the occasion except very attractive jackets which, while in no way to be decried, do not help the music that, after all, is the thing. The Ravel disc has very tough competition, to be sure, but the Saint-Saëns defeats itself both artistically and technically. W.

Harrison: Suite for Violin, Piano and Small Orchestra. Anahid Ajemian (violin), Maro Ajemian (piano) and Leopold Stokowski and his Orchestra. One side, and **Weber: Symphony on Poems of William Blake, Op. 33.** Warren Galjour (baritone) with Leopold Stokowski and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1785) \$5.95.

This latest venture into the recording field by Leopold Stokowski is hardly designed to make the best sellers list within the present generation; but it is a much needed excursion into the field of contemporary music, and few are better qualified to lead such an excursion than Stokowski. For those who delve into contemporary music, the selection of these two works is most interesting. Harrison's *Suite* is a work commissioned by the Ajemian sisters, Maro and Anahid, in 1951. It not only gives solo flights of fancy and intricate duet passages to the two artists, but it is cast in the aesthetic mold closest to their hearts; for they have long been in the forefront of the movement to include the moods and instrumentation of Asian and Middle Eastern music within the musical diet of American concert-giving. This last sentence, from the jacket notes, is rather a capsule description of the work. Anyone who has heard a Gamelan will instantly recognize an imitation of this Balinese style throughout the entire work. As one who has always been fascinated by Gamelan music, this reviewer found Harrison's *Suite* enchanting, and while it may appear modern to some, it is hardly a fair description of the music merely to call it modern. It is different, but it has a delicate texture of the most subtle musical sounds, a fascinating blend of

instruments and percussions, all woven together with a happy, peaceful, joyous, and graceful style. To us, this is worth all of the twelve-tone music in existence. Hi-fi enthusiasts will enjoy this disc if only for the percussion sounds so beautifully recorded. Nothing but praise could be offered for Stokowski's conducting of the music and the splendid performances he elicits.

Ben Weber's *Symphony* is a long and taxing twelve-tone work for the singer, dedicated to Mr. Galjour. For those who like atonalism, this work is recommended; but it is not our cup of tea, and we can find little to say about it one way or the other, except that Galjour and Stokowski take it very seriously and obviously do justice to the score. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 3 in D minor. Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1195) \$5.95.

May 1954 saw the review in these columns of the Bruckner *Third* as performed by F. Charles Adler and the Vienna Philharmonia (*SPA-30/1), a performance which our colleague felt dragged along in a rather disconnected fashion. Walter Goehr, while not known as a Bruckner specialist as much as Adler, is not guilty of meandering in the score; he keeps things moving and retains our interest. This sounds to us like a sympathetic, understanding, and very fair reading of the music, and it impressed us rather deeply, as did the playing of the Netherlands Philharmonic, of which Mr. Goehr is in command. The reproduction is very fine.

Bruckner's *Third*, written when he was 49, and little known, is dedicated to Wagner, Bruckner's idol; the dedication was accepted after Wagner examined the score and decided it was a masterpiece. A quarter of a century after its completion, it was one of the most popular works in the symphonic repertory (around 1900). This work contains one of the best scherzos Bruckner ever wrote, and he was famous for his third movement scherzos. It presents free developments on whirling violin figures and a more song-like counter-theme. The accompanying Trio is an elaborate statement and working-up of a waltz-like theme. We have heard several recordings of this famous scherzo and think that none of them betters the enthusiastic treatment Goehr and his men bestow upon this folklorish gem. In fact, this scherzo seems to warm them up, for they do a capital job with the dramatic finale and its triumphant coda. S.

Dittersdorf: Symphony in A minor. Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Kloss. One side, and **Louis Ferdinand: Rondo for Piano and Orchestra.** Otto Graef (piano) with the Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Kloss. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-26) \$5.95.

Although Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf (1739-1799) was a most prolific composer, very few of his works have ever been recorded. He was probably

overshadowed by his contemporaries Haydn, Mozart and Gluck. Dittersdorf has to his credit over one hundred symphonies, and among his numerous chamber works are some thirty string quintets. The present symphony is one of his later ones and shows the influence of Haydn and Mozart. It is a delightful piece to listen to and should give most music lovers considerable enjoyment. It will doubtless be new to practically all of our readers . . . Louis Ferdinand, Prince of Prussia and nephew of Frederick II, was born near Berlin in 1772 and died on the field of battle at Saalfeld in 1806. He was an amateur musician of considerable talent, being both a concert pianist of note and a composer of more than average ability. He was a great admirer of Beethoven, and his compositions bear the mark of that giant of music. His works, as is the present *Rondo for Piano and Orchestra*, are mostly on the brighter side and seem to have been written with the enjoyment of the listener very much in mind. For a pleasing work that will be new to most music lovers we do not hesitate to recommend the present recording.

Vaughan Williams: The Wasps. One side, and **Vaughan Williams: Old King Cole.** Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5228) \$5.95.

Poulenc: Les Biches. One side, and **Fauré—orch. Rabaud: Dolly Suite, Op. 56.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*MGME-E-3098) \$4.85.

Chopin: Les Sylphides. One side, and **Ibert: Divertissement.** L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-884) \$5.95.

Khachaturian: Masquerade Suite. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Richard Blareau. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9100) \$2.95.

Weber—arr. Berlioz: Spectre de la Rose. One side, and **Minkus: Don Quichotte.** New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9108) \$2.95.

To conserve space we have grouped the above records together. For the most part they contain music of the ballet, much of which has been recorded previously and is well-known to our readers. Of particular interest to us was the first disc listed containing Vaughan Williams' incidental music to Aristophanes' play "The Wasps" and his ballet suite *Old King Cole*. Neither of these may be considered music of much import, but each in its way holds a certain interest. *The Wasps Suite*, while not containing one Greek theme, has seemingly caught the satiric spirit of Aristophanes' play and is intriguing to listen to. *Old King Cole* is an amusing ballet based on the familiar nursery rhyme, and Vaughan Williams has written some mighty amusing music for it. It is thoroughly enjoyable. . . . Another item that caught

our fancy was Fauré's charming suite entitled *Dolly* that depicts some lovely little incidents occurring in the life of a little girl and her pet kitten. *Dolly* was originally written for piano (four hands) and has been most felicitously orchestrated by Henri Rabaud. We found it delightful listening and as such do not hesitate to recommend it. . . . As an oddity we recommend Ludwig Minkus' ballet suite *Don Quichotte*. Minkus was a Viennese by birth but spend a great deal of time in Russia where he was an official ballet composer for the Russian Imperial Theatres. *Don Quichotte* is a product of his work in that country and was first performed at the Bolshoi Theater (Moscow) in December 1869. Although it is practically unknown anywhere else, it has remained popular in Russia and is still performed there quite frequently. We don't know anything about the ballet itself, but the music is certainly very pleasing to listen to. As a novelty we recommend it highly.

McDonald: From Childhood (Suite). One side, and **Caplet: The Mask of the Red Death (Conte Fantastique).** Ann Mason Stockton (harp) with the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8255) \$5.70.

We are delighted to note that an LP recording, and by the way a very excellent one, is now available of Earl McDonald's charming suite *From Childhood*. This Suite consists of a set of variations on six old English nursery tunes. We recall that a 78 rpm version of this work was released by RCA Victor in 1941 with Edna Phillips, to whom the piece was dedicated, as the soloist and the composer on the podium with the Philadelphia Orchestra. It was well received when it was issued and continued to enjoy a reasonable sale until it was dropped from the catalog.

We cannot imagine a more peculiar coupling than that of the present disc. McDonald's thoroughly delightful and refreshing *From Childhood* teamed up with Caplet's somber impressionistic piece based on Poe's gruesome tale entitled "Mask of the Red Death." From nursery rhymes to Poe's tale of horror and pestilence is quite a step. However, each is interesting in its way, and both selections have been nicely performed and recorded with excellent fidelity.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G ("Surprise").** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1789) \$5.95.

From the many LP recordings that are available of these popular symphonies we are very sure that a large number of music lovers will select Toscanini's performances on the present disc. As we listened to them we had no feeling that the maestro was hurrying through them, but rather that he was handling them with delicacy and quite the proper spirit. We might mention that they have been recorded at a very low volume level and that the volume control

on your phonograph should not be turned up above the level at which they were recorded. If this is done, an annoying surface noise will be brought out. This is, of course, absent when they are played at the volume at which they were recorded.

Liszt: Les Preludes (Symphonic Poem No. 3). And **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1.** One side, and **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2** and **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 3** and **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Schwarz. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1070) \$2.98.

Here is an excellent value in RCA Victor's "Bluebird Classics" series of moderate price LP discs for those who are interested in the music of Franz Liszt. This disc contains several of his most popular selections, and they are played with proper spirit and have been nicely recorded.

Strauss Waltzes, Polkas and Marches. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Anton Paulik. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-443) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Tales from the Vienna Woods; Voices of Spring; Emperor Waltz; Village Swallows; Transmitted Polka; Dot on the i Polka; Hunting Polka; Persian March; Der Zigeunerbaron—Entrance March.*

Strauss Waltzes and Overtures. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm and the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Hermann Abendroth and Herbert Kegel. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-21) \$3.50.

CONTENTS: *Die Fledermaus—Overture (Böhm); Voices of Spring (Kegel); Waldmeister—Overture (Abendroth); Der Zigeunerbaron—Overture (Abendroth); On the Beautiful Blue Danube (Kegel); Artist's Life (Abendroth).*

Strauss: Frühlingstimmen, Op. 410. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay, with Wilma Lipp (soprano). One side, and **Strauss: G'schichten aus dem Wiener Wald, Op. 325.** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner, with Rudy Knabl (zither). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4041) \$2.50.

Overtures and Waltzes of Strauss and Suppé. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt and Franz Salmhofer. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3022) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Die Fledermaus — Overture (Strauss); Der Zigeunerbaron—Overture (Strauss); Poet and Peasant Overture (Suppé); Where the Lemon Trees Bloom (Strauss); Aquarellen Waltz (Strauss); Acceleration Waltz (Strauss).*

As there is nothing outstanding in these recordings of popular selections of Strauss (Johann, Jr. and Josef) and Suppé, we are merely listing them for our readers' information.

Mozart: Symphony No. 1 in E-flat, K. 16. And **Mozart: Symphony No. 2 in B-flat, K. 17.** One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat, K. 22.** And **Mozart: Symphony No. 6 in F, K. 43.** Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1165) \$5.95.

Mozart: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, K. 18. And **Mozart: Symphony No. 13 in F, K. 112.** One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 15 in G, K. 124.** And **Mozart: Symphony No. 16 in C, K. 128.** Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1178) \$5.95.

Mozart: Symphony No. 18 in F, K. 130. And **Mozart: Symphony No. 19 in E-flat, K. 132.** One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 20 in D, K. 133.** And **Mozart: Symphony No. 21 in A, K. 134.** Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1193) \$5.95.

Mozart: Symphony No. 22 in D, K. 162. And **Mozart: Symphony No. 23 in D, K. 181.** One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 24 in B-flat, K. 182.** And **Mozart: Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183.** Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1194) \$5.95.

Otto Ackermann is engaged in recording for Concert Hall a whole series of Mozart Symphonies. Of particular interest are the very early ones to and including No. 6 which were all written before Wolfgang was twelve years of age. All of the symphonies listed above were composed before Mozart reached his 18th year. A few of them have already appeared on LP discs but none of them have been as well performed and recorded as in this present series.

Fiedler's Twenty-Fifth. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1790) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1* (Elgar); *None But the Lonely Heart* (Tchaikovsky); *Thunder and Lightning Polka* (Strauss); *Rose Mousse—Entr'acte* (Bosc); *Loin du Bal* (Gillet); *Mosquito Dance* (White); *La Golondrina* (Serradell); *Radetzky March* (Strauss); *Cydalise—Entrance of the Little Fauns* (Pierne); *Sleeping Beauty—Waltz* (Tchaikovsky); *Natoma—Dagger Dance* (Herbert); *Wien bleibt Wien* (Schramml); *La Campanella* (Liszt); *Die Fledermaus—Polka* (Strauss); *The Birthday Fantasy* (Cailliet); *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (Steffe).

The present LP disc is being issued to mark the 25th anniversary of Arthur Fiedler's conductorship of the famous Boston Pops Orchestra. It contains a collection of his most popular recordings. It might well be called a "request" program; for if one were

assembled, we are very sure that most, if not all, of the present selections would be included.

R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20. One side, and **R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28.** Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. And **Liszt: Les Preludes.** Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3032) \$5.95.

As all three of the selections on this LP disc are already represented in the catalogs with at least one or two better recordings, we can see no reason for its release. We can see some sense to a choice from three or four versions of a work but a choice from a dozen versions is mere confusion.

Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suites Nos. 1 & 2. One and one-half sides, and **Bizet: La jolie Fille de Perth—Suite.** L'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35048TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35048) \$5.95.

We cannot get overly excited about this one. There are better renditions of it already available on LP discs. The music itself is not of sufficient importance to warrant more than one satisfactory recording of it.

Schumann: Overture, Scherzo and Finale, Op. 52. One side, and **Brahms: Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80** and **Brahms: Tragic Overture, Op. 81.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lawrence Collingwood. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3102) \$4.85.

We can see no particular need for the issuance of this LP disc, as there are already at least two or three highly satisfactory recordings of each of the Brahms' overtures and one of the Schumann *Overture, Scherzo and Finale, Op. 52*. Only a very few dealers in the larger cities can cope with this sort of duplication.

Haydn: Symphony No. 85 in B-flat ("La Reine"). One side, and **K. P. E. Bach—trans. Steinberg: Concerto for Orchestra in D.** MGM Chamber Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3109) \$4.85.

While there are one or two other recordings of each of these selections already available, we feel that there is definitely room for these new versions. Izler Solomon is a musician of rare talent, and with the fine group of players that he has gathered together he has produced recordings of real merit.

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46. Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. One side, and **Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 2, Op. 55.** Erna Spoorenberg (soprano) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3007) \$5.95.

Epic comes through with superb recordings of

Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suites Nos. 1 and 2*. An added feature of the second suite is Erna Spoorberg's singing of the *Solvejg's Song*. Miss Spoorberg has a clear smooth soprano voice of excellent quality, and she quite properly keeps her rendition in the field of folk music; the temptation to make this simple song overly dramatic, as so many operatic sopranos have done, fortunately never seems to occur to this fine artist.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Solomon (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1056) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15. One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Rondo in B-flat, Op. Posth.** Friedrich Wührer (piano) with the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8400) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. David Oistrakh (violin) with the State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Alexander Gauk. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1303) \$5.95.

The line-up of artists who have recorded the Beethoven *Fourth Concerto* is indeed a formidable one: Backhaus, Badura-Skoda, Casadesu, Gieseking, Noväes, Rubinstein, Schnabel, a few others, and now Solomon. No matter which we name as the top one, or the several best, there will be plenty of disagreement. It so happens that none of these great artists listed has turned in a poor performance of the work, and most of them enjoy reproduction acceptable by current standards. Solomon plays the work with care and an unusual amount of restraint, particularly in the first movement. As always, with Solomon, there is strength and sanity in his every move, solid values, and a sparkling technique. The orchestral accompaniment is most carefully directed and the reproduction has a very warm and plushy quality. While we must admit the competence of this recording, we still are not greatly moved by the performance, and our preference remains for Noväes-Klemperer (*VX-PL-7090), Backhaus-Krauss, or Rubinstein-Beecham in about that order.

Friedrich Wührer's reading of the lovely Beethoven *First Concerto* is an admirable one, very well accompanied and recorded with sharp detail and definition. It is quite a match for the Badura-Skoda-Scherchen version previously named as the best of the LP's. These two pianists, plus the veteran Gieseking, have the best of the *First Concerto* recordings, and if we were to name a choice it would be for the present disc by Wührer if for nothing more than the interesting filler on the second side, a first recording of a *Rondo* which may well have been a discarded finale of the second concerto.

Whatever Oistrakh's fame as a violinist is built on, it is certainly not on his performance of the Beethoven *Violin Concerto*, for this disc is about the poorest of any listed in the LP catalog. It is lethargic from the first orchestral passage, almost clumsy in spots, a lot of note-playing with no feeling for the large form, and generally speaking an annoying listening experience, heightened by poorly balanced reproduction. The same amount of money will buy Francescatti, Heifetz, or any of the other fine readings. S.

Bartók: Concerto No. 3. One side, and **Prokofiev: Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26.** Leonard Pennario (piano) with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8253) \$5.70.

Bartók: Concerto No. 3. One side, and **Prokofiev: Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26.** Julius Katchen (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-945) \$5.95.

Both of the brilliant composers represented on these discs were among our greatest contemporaries. Both wrote prolifically for the piano, an instrument which each understood well. The pairing of their third concertos is a rather natural thing, for the third is the most popular in both cases. The pairing also provides admirable contrast for the listener. Prokofiev's *Third* is one of his earliest mature works, written in 1917 when he was only twenty-six, around the time of the *Classical Symphony*. Bartók's *Third* was his last completed work, written more than a quarter of a century after Prokofiev's *Third*. Capitol's annotator sums up the comparison of these works nicely in one sentence in his jacket notes: "In contrast to the youthful buoyance, the brashness and irony of Prokofiev's concerto, Bartók's has the quiet self-confidence of the mature artist whose achievements have liberated him from the competition of the musical market-place."

Bartók's *Third* has had one previous LP of importance: Sandor and Ormandy; Prokofiev's *Third* has had two: Kapell and Dorati, and Mitropoulos both playing and conducting. Considering the excellence of performance and recording of these two new discs, one would be inclined to select either of them because of the ideal coupling. Which to select may cause some to ponder, but our preference is for Pennario and Golschmann. Both Pennario and Katchen are young virtuoso pianists with sparkling techniques, and both play these works with a real flair. Our choice is Pennario because we prefer the orchestral accompaniment and the reproduction accorded his readings to that given Katchen. Golschmann provides admirable support, and the Capitol reproduction sounded better and clearer on our set in many of the *tutti* passages. Capitol permits the piano to stand out more boldly, without sacrificing the orchestral accompaniment. It is a fine disc, representative of Capitol's best work. S.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 129. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33.** Maurice Gendron (violoncello) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*LL-947) \$5.95.

Of the now six recorded versions that are available of Schumann's *Concerto in A minor*, we would certainly say that the present one is the best. Its only competition is the early RCA Victor one with Piatigorsky and the London Philharmonic under Barbirolli. . . . Of particular interest to us was the recording of Tchaikovsky's *Variations on a Rococo Theme*; a previous 10-inch LP on Vox has recently been deleted. It receives a splendid performance and is well recorded on the present disc. While it is not an important Tchaikovsky composition, it is a pleasing one—a simple little work, restful and delightful for a few minutes of perfect relaxation. A fairly stirring finale brings one back to life.

Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in G, K. 313. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 2 in D, K. 314.** Hubert Barwahser (flute) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3033) \$5.95.

Of the many LP recordings now available of both of these Mozart Concertos for Flute and Orchestra, we would place the present versions up near the top. Hubert Barwahser is a flutist of rare talent and certainly rates with the best in his field. Epic has supplied very good reproduction. Our only criticism is that at times the flute is given too much prominence at the expense of the accompanying orchestra—the recording technicians might have maintained a better balance between the solo instrument and the orchestra.

Chopin: Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. Alexander Uninsky (piano) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3012) \$5.95.

If we had to make a choice from the many recorded versions of this Chopin Concerto we would still pick as our number one favorite the Brailowsky recording. Following this we would place the Sandor version with the Philadelphia Orchestra. The present recording might well be number three. Hi-fi fans might select it above all others because of its extremely wide range.

CHORAL



Bach: Easter Oratorio. (Sung in German). Laurence Dutoit (soprano); Maria Nussbaumer (alto); Franz Gruber (tenor); Otto Wiener (bass); instrumental soloists, Akademie Kammerchor and Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra of Vienna conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8620) \$5.95.

Musicological research can be, at times, very annoying (smug could be a less polite word for it) and,

in other instances, it can be very revealing, positively fascinating. It is the latter aspect of musical research that comes to the fore in the genesis of Bach's *Easter Oratorio*.

This work, written in 1736, has a curious history. In 1725, Bach wrote a cantata (secular) *Entfliehet, verschwindet* to celebrate the birthday of a German prince, Duke Christian of Sachsen-Weissenfels. A little later the economical (or hard pressed) Bach used the same music for another birthday cantata, this time for a Count Fleming. Then, eleven years later, the music was used for a vastly different purpose—an Easter Oratorio, based on a paraphrase of Biblical texts. There is a moral inherent in all this—some real food for thought. Musical purists (including the writer), please take note!

This is the second recording of the piece, Bach Guild having done it (rather poorly from a technical point of view) a few years ago (TNR Feb. '52). This new version on Vox is an improvement, technically, although the singers in the earlier set were equally as good as those recruited by Vox for the present recording. Laurence Dutoit is particularly fine as the soprano soloist although the others are not far behind. The chorus and orchestra under Ferdinand Grossmann do excellently.

The *Easter Oratorio* was revised by Bach twice, but no indication as to the version used was vouchsafed either by Bach Guild or by Vox, although it is probably a safe bet to assume it is the final revision in each case.

Good music, fine recording, informative notes and the complete German-English text are all in evidence.

W.

Schubert: Mass in G. One side, and **Bach: Motet No. 5** ("Komm, Jesu, komm"). And **Brahms: Der Abend, Op. 64, No. 2.** And **Brahms: Nächstens, Op. 112, No. 2.** And **Brahms: Zum Schluss, Op. 65, No. 15.** Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1784) \$5.95.

The *Mass in G major* is an early work of Schubert's (he was eighteen years old when he wrote it); and, while it certainly is the work of a talented composer, it is derivative to a considerable extent. There are echos of Mozart, Pergolesi and, of course, Haydn. It was also written in the comparatively short space of five or six days (between 2 and 7 March 1815, to be exact) and is predominantly a vocal Mass, a typical *Land-Messe*, being scored for strings and organ only.

The Robert Shaw Chorale sings with all its wonted precision and tonal accuracy and yet one comes away from the performance a little disappointed. Despite its many excellencies, there is a lack of genuine understanding of the idiom—the music is performed almost too perfectly. All the notes are sung at their face value, but little more has been done. An earlier recording on Vox (TNR July '52) is surpassed technically by this new release but neither interpretively nor musically.

The Bach *Motet* and the Brahms songs fare a little better, probably because they can stand this sort of treatment—being tougher and harder. These latter pieces, however, can hardly be numbered among their respective composers' most inspired works. The Bach piece is neatly sung, and the Brahms *lieder* are equally well performed; but the net result still left this writer cold.

RCA Victor has not supplied any notes worthy of the name, and the text of the *Mass* and the *Motet* are given in English only, although the German-English words are printed for the Brahms works. Good recorded sound. W.

Anthology of Renaissance Music. The Primavera Singers of the Pro Musica Antiqua (N. Y.) directed by Noah Greenberg. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-597) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Kyrie eleison* (Dufay); *Tu solus* (Josquin des Pres); *Adoremus Te* (Lassus); *Ave Maria* (Josquin des Pres); *Agnus Dei* (Morley); *Ave Maria* (Victoria); *Assumpta est* (Palestrina); *O Jesu Christe* (Berchem); *Salve Regina* (Lassus); *Locundare Jerusalem* (Mouton); *Eheu* (Morley); *Domine fac mecum* (Morley); *O vos omnes* (Victoria); *Resonet in laudibus* (Lassus).

Motets of the Venetian School (Vol. 2). Choir of the Capella di Treviso directed by Msgr. Giovanni d'Alessi. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8610) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Cantabant sancti* (Asola); *Benedicam Dominum* (Croce); *Ego dormivi* (Willært); *Hoc signum Crucis* (Asola); *Beati eritis* (Croce); *Virtute magna repleti quidem* (Porta); *Adoramus te Christe* (Ruffo); *Salutis humanae sator* (Vecchi); *Surge amica mea* (Asola); *Migravit Judas* (Nasco); *Ego sum pauper* (Croce); *Exaltabo te Domine* (Croce); *Cantate Domino* (Croce); *A Domine Jesu Christe* (Ingegneri); *Introduxit me Rex* (Asola); *Omnes de Saba* (Asola); *Surrexit Pastor bonus* (Asola).

These two discs of 15th and 16th century music will prove a bonanza for students of the period.

The *Anthology of Renaissance Music* is a particularly fine selection, with each item obviously carefully chosen and exquisitely sung. Ranging from Dufay, Lassus, Morley, Josquin des Pres and Victoria, it embraces examples of the work of all the principal composers of the period. Highlights are the *Tu solus* (Josquin des Pres); *Domine fac mecum* (Morley) and Victoria's familiar *O vos omnes*. All the other music is on an equally high plane, and the disc can be warmly recommended. Of especial interest is the beautiful singing of the Primavera Singers, a group of six voices that blend extraordinarily well. Phrasing, pitch and expression are all virtually perfect, and the record can be enjoyed by both student and neophyte alike.

A somewhat different story must be told about the Vox disc. It is devoted to *Motets of the Venetian School* and is a more austere and forbidding collection (a polite way of saying that the writer found them dull). There are seventeen motets recorded here, many by unfamiliar composers such as Asola, Porta, Nasco and so forth. There is a sameness, a monotonous quality about the record that could be inherent in the music, but which one feels inclined to blame on the conductor and his performing artists.

The recording is good on both discs, and the texts and translation thereof have been furnished. W.

Bach: St. Matthew Passion. (Sung in English). Lois Marshall, Mary Morrison (sopranos); Margaret Stilwell (contralto); Edward Johnson, James Lamond (tenors); Donald Brown, James Miligan, Eric Tredwell (baritones); Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and Toronto Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Ernest MacMillan. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LBC-6101) \$8.94.

This most recent recording of Bach's *Passion According to St. Matthew* has several things to recommend it to certain buyers. One is its very modest price (\$8.94); another is the fact that it is sung in English. There are, undoubtedly, numerous church choirs and other groups that could profit by studying Sir Ernest MacMillan's excellent reading of the monumental score. Naturally, when compared with the more pretentious offerings on Westminster (Dr. Scherchen *et al*) this one sounds a little tame. Nevertheless, there are moments of real beauty in its reverent and traditional interpretation.

Sir Ernest's approach is at once dignified and musicianly. His chorus and orchestra are first class, and the result is a reading that has not only a degree of sincerity (often lacking in other performances), but it is also convincing, even though one's preference (like the writer's) may favor a more dramatic approach. The soloists are only fair; most of them fall in the category of competent but unimaginative vocalists.

The "standard" cuts have been made and RCA Victor is to be congratulated for noting the omissions on the record labels. A booklet giving the words is included. The album indicates the recording is a "high fidelity" one, but here one treads on *terra incognita*. What is "high fidelity"? Certainly this recording, while it is good, can be surpassed by dozens of others—what is one's standard of comparison? It is not, to be specific, as good (technically) as the Westminster set (TNR Nov. '53) nor is it as poor as the old Columbia set made under Mengelberg's direction. Perhaps it will suffice to say that the recording is easy to listen to—certainly it ranks with some of the better, and more expensive, LP's. W.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Quintet in C, K. 515. One side, and **Mozart: Quintet in B-flat, K. 174.** Pascal String Quartet with Walter Gerhard (viola). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1185) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quintet in G minor, K. 516. One side, and **Mozart: Quintet in C minor, K. 406.** Pascal String Quartet with Walter Gerhard (viola). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1186) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quintet in D, K. 593. One side, and **Mozart: Quintet in E-flat, K. 614.** Pascal String Quartet with Walter Gerhard (viola). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1187) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quintet in E-flat, K. 407. Pascal String Quartet with Werner Speth (French horn). One side, and **Mozart: Quintet in B-flat, K. 46.** Pascal String Quartet with Walter Gerhard (viola). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1188) \$5.95.

Mozart: Adagio and Rondo in E-flat for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Oboe, Viola and Violoncello, K. 617. Members of the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra (Vienna). And **Mozart: Andante in C for Flute and Orchestra, K. 315.** Camillo Wanausek (flute) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra (Vienna). One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in C for Flute and Harp, K. 299.** Camillo Wanausek (flute), Hubert Jellinek (harp) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra (Vienna). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8550) \$5.95.

The Pascal String Quartet, with the able assistance of Walter Gerhard (viola) and Werner Speth (French horn), gives splendid performances of these Mozart quintets. . . . Of especial interest to us was the novelty number on the Vox disc, namely, the *Adagio and Rondo in E-flat for Glass Harmonica, Flute, Oboe, Viola and Violoncello*. This work was written shortly before Mozart's death for the blind glass harmonica virtuoso, Marianne Kirchgässner, and was a great success with music lovers of the period. Now it is merely an item of historic interest.

OPERA



Recital of Arias. (Sung in English). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9066) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Rodelinda*—Dove sei amato bene (Handel); *Orfeo ed Euridice*—Che farò senza Euridice (Gluck); *Serse*—Largo (Handel); *Elijah*—O Rest in the Lord (Mendelssohn).

The *Rodelinda* and *Orfeo* arias previously reached these shores under the English Decca label in 78 rpm days (see TNR May '49); the other two will be new to most American collectors, although they were issued in England on 78's. However, admirers of

Miss Ferrier's art will probably welcome this little memento of the late contralto. The reproduction, considering that these were originally 78's, is more than acceptable.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Milan conducted by Franco Ghione. Three sides, and **An Operatic Recital by Mario del Monaco.** Mario del Monaco (tenor) with the Milan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Franco Ghione. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-990/1) \$11.90.

Turiddu.....Mario del Monaco (t)
Santuzza.....Elena Nicolai (s)
Alfio.....Aldo Protti (bt)
Lola.....Laura Didier (s)
Lucia.....Anna Maria Anelli (ms)

CONTENTS OF OPERATIC RECITAL: *Loreley*—Nel verde maggio (Catalani); *Il Tabarro*—Hai ben ragione (Puccini); *Andrea Chenier*—Un di all'azzurro spazio (Giordano); *Fanciulla del West*—Or son sei mesi (Puccini); *Turandot*—Nessun dorma! (Puccini); *Bohème*—Che gelida manina (Puccini).

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Tullio Serafin. 2-12" discs (three sides only) (*ANG-35121/2TP) \$7.90. 2-12" factory-sealed discs (three sides only) (*ANG-3509) \$9.90.

Santuzza.....Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Lola.....Anna Maria Canali (ms)
Turiddu.....Giuseppe di Stefano (t)
Alfio.....Rolando Panerai (bt)
Lucia.....Ebe Ticozzi (c)

These two new recorded performances of *Cavalleria Rusticana* offer an interesting contrast, to this writer at least, in that the featured singer in each case (del Monaco on the London, Callas on the Angel) is out-sung and out-acted by his less publicized partner.

To get down to individual cases, however, the London set is a good one, one of the most satisfactory from many standpoints that has yet been issued. Easily the star performer is Elena Nicolai whose Santuzza is vocally sure and dramatically sincere. She is, one feels sure, a mezzo soprano, and consequently her low notes are vibrant and impart a tremendous emotional impact. At the close of the duet where Turiddu throws her to the ground, her performance is astonishing in its fervor and realism. Del Monaco is wooden throughout. As in previous recordings he seems unable to sing below the level of *f*—usually *ff*—and this, coupled with his inability to sing with expression or color a phrase, makes his performance dull. Protti is a reasonable Alfio. Maestro Ghione paces his performance well and the recording is good indeed.

The Angel's set's chief merit is the superb Turiddu

of Giuseppe di Stefano. All that del Monaco lacks di Stefano has in abundance, with the result that the Angel set is preferable on this count alone. The duet, the drinking song and the finale (*Mama, quel vino è generoso*) are sung with beauty of tone and genuine fire. Di Stefano, incidentally, is a Sicilian by birth. Callas is good, not as exciting as Nicolai, but nonetheless she turns in a good performance as the harried Santuzza. Rolando Panerai's Alfio is far and away the best of any on records. Tulio Serafin's direction adds much to the performance, being carefully considered and well paced.

Angel's is the more elaborate package, although the direction of the original story on which the opera was based (while seemingly a good idea) is spoiled by the use of an absurd English translation by D. H. Lawrence. Recording on the Angel, while pretty good, is no match for London's *frr*.

The odd side of the Angel set is blank and, so far as this writer is concerned, the odd side of the London set could have been left blank too, for del Monaco screams his way through a half dozen familiar and unfamiliar arias in a manner that leaves much (everything) to be desired. W.

Rossini: Il Signor Bruschino (complete). (Sung in Italian). Elda Ribetti (soprano); Claudia Carbi (mezzo-soprano); Carlo Rossi, Luigi Pontiggia (tenors); Renato Capecchi, Carmelo Maugeri, Walter Tarozi (baritones); Ivo Vinco (bass); Milan Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ennio Gerelli. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8460) \$5.95.

Rossini: Il Cambio della Valigia (complete). (Sung in Italian). Gianna Russo (soprano); Giuseppina Salvi (mezzo-soprano); Piero Besma, Flavio Sacchi (tenors); Nestore Catalani (baritone); Tito Dolciotti (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of Societa del Quartetto conducted by Giuseppe Morelli. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-595) \$5.95.

The practice of recording all the little *farsa* and festival operas of Rossini, Cimarosa and others is, by and large, a questionable enterprise musically—although it is surprising what can be done when a good cast is assembled under the direction of an efficient conductor.

An example of the latter state of affairs is this Vox recording of *Il Signor Bruschino*. This is a large gem of an opera, with more than a slight foretaste of the later *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. It has a sparkling overture, one of the most enchanting of tenor arias (certainly equal to the more famous *Ecco ridente* from "Il Barbiere"), a beautiful aria for soprano and some lively concerted numbers. This writer was particularly pleased to note what he believes to be the first appearance on LP discs of Elda Ribetti, a young lyric soprano of genuine gifts. She made a few post-war 78's for HMV and then seemingly disappeared from sight; it is a real treat to have her back and

singing more beautifully than ever. As Sophia she sings with expression, tonal beauty and a sure sense of style. Another surprise was the exquisite singing of an unknown tenor, Luigi Pontiggia, who sounds a bit like a youthful Tito Schipa. Renato Capecchi, Ivo Vinco and others in the cast also do very well, making *Il Signor Bruschino* a desirable addition to any record library. Good recording, the complete libretto and crisp direction by Ennio Gerelli are added features.

The other work to be considered here, *Il Cambio della Valigia* (better known by its sub-title *Occasion Makes the Thief*) suffers from poor singing and direction. It was written in eleven days, had five performances, and then was forgotten. It was not fair to exhume it and not give it a chance, but neither the singers nor conductor Morelli seem too much interested. Recorded sound is not overly good. W.

Operatic Recital. (All selections sung in German). Helge Roswänge (tenor) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-7010) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Vespri Siciliani*—Giorno di pianto; *Huguenots*—Plus blanche que la blanche hermine; *Turandot*—Non piangere & Nessun dorma; *Postillion de Longjumeau*—Mes amis, écoutez l'histoire; *Aïda*—Gia i sacerdoti adunansi; *Madama Butterfly*—Addio fiorito asil; *Traviata*—De' miei bollenti spiriti; *Life for the Czar*—Boydan Sobinjin's Aria; *Don Giovanni*—Il mio tesoro; *Vespri Siciliani*—Sogon, o son desto? & Quando al mio sen per te parlava; *Carmen*—La fleur que tu m'avais jetée; *Trovatore*—Ah, si ben mio & Di quella pira.

Classic Editions has gathered together a number of recordings by the great Danish tenor, Helge Roswänge, showing his voice at various periods during his long career in the opera houses of Europe, and placed them on the present LP disc. His was a most magnificent voice with a tremendous range. Those opera lovers who have heard him abroad (he never came to America) or are familiar with his great art through phonograph records, many of which have appeared in this country, will doubtless find this record of interest.

Verdi: Aïda—Nile Scene (complete). (Sung in Italian). Renata Tebaldi (soprano), Mario del Monaco (tenor), Aldo Protti (baritone), and Orchestra of the St. Cecilia Academy (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. (TNR Feb. '53). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9055) \$2.95.

"W" greeted the issuance of London's complete *Aïda* (TNR Feb. '53) warmly last year. London, feeling that many might like to have the Nile Scene who may not wish the entire opera, has now issued the above disc, which is quite a bargain at its modest price.

VOCAL



Songs from Shakespeare's Plays. Murray Dickie (tenor) with the Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4010) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Brooklet Song* (Prelude to a Shakespeare Comedy); *Tell Me Where Is Fancy Bred* (Merchant of Venice); *You Spotted Snakes* (Midsummer Night's Dream); *Sigh No More Ladies* (Much Ado); *Under the Greenwood Tree*, *Blow Blow Thou Winter Wind*, *It Was a Lover and His Lass* (As You Like It); *O Mistress Mine, Come Away Death* (Twelfth Night); *When Icicles Hang by the Wall*, *When Daisies Pied* (Love's Labour Lost); *Come Unto These Yellow Sands*, *Full Fathom Five*, *Where the Bee Sucks* (The Tempest); *Who Is Sylvia?* (Two Gentlemen of Verona); *Hark Hark the Lark* (Cymbeline); *Take Oh Those Lips Away* (Measure for Measure).

Shakespeare Songs. Lawrence Chelsi (baritone) with piano accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*MAGIC-TONE MLO-1010) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *If Music Be the Food of Love*, *O Mistress Mine, Come Away Death* (Twelfth Night); *Heart's Ease* (Romeo and Juliet); *When Daisies Pied*, *When Icicles Hang by the Wall* (Love's Labour Lost); *And Let Me the Canakin Clink* (Othello); *How Should I Your True Love Know*, *They Bore Him Bare-faced on the Bier*, *And Will a' Not Come Again?* (Hamlet); *Will You Buy Any Tape?* *Jog On* (Winter's Tale); *Light o' Love* (Two Gentlemen of Verona & Much Ado); *No More Dams I'll Make for Fish* (The Tempest); *Under the Greenwood Tree* (As You Like It); *Through the Forest* (Midsummer Night's Dream).

The Westminster disc contains an instrumental prelude and musical setting of sixteen songs composed by Leslie Bridgewater for Shakespearean productions that have been given in England during the last ten years. Among other duties Mr. Bridgewater is the Musical Director of the Shakespearean Festival Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon and has devoted much time and thought in an attempt to place these famous songs in appropriate musical settings—settings that would catch the simple and tuneful charm of the Elizabethan period. We think that he has done very well, and we believe that students of the immortal bard will be highly pleased with his efforts. Murray Dickie, under the composer's direction and with his support, presents these songs in a sincere and straightforward manner, avoiding all inappropriate flourishes.

On the second record by Magic-Tone will be found seventeen Shakespearean songs in their traditional settings—at least the tunes are the ones that have been familiarly associated with these songs for at least the last one hundred and fifty years. Lawrence Chelsi, realizing that these songs must be understood to be appreciated, has taken great care with his diction

so that each word comes out crystal clear. The simple piano accompaniments are kept well in the background. If you wish the tunes that you know, this is the disc to select, but if you are a bit daring and would like to hear what a very able contemporary composer has to offer, you will probably find the Westminster record highly interesting and rewarding.

R.

Schumann: Liederkreis, Op. 39. One side, and **Brahms: (4) Ernste Gesänge, Op. 121.** (Sung in German). William Warfield (baritone) accompanied by Otto Herz (piano). 1-12" disc (*CML-4860) \$5.95.

The vocal art of William Warfield, the young American Negro baritone, has not been too well represented on records. His first release, *Old American Songs*, was not of much musical value. This was followed by a truly fine disc of *Loewe Ballads* and some ancient Church Music (an odd but interesting combination). Subsequently a disc of spirituals was released that were, as one could well imagine, expressively sung. This new recording, however, gives the record collector an opportunity to hear Warfield in some music from the traditional repertoire.

Robert Schumann's *Liederkreis* appears here in its third LP recording but for the first time by a male singer. This set of twelve songs comprises some of Schumann's most characteristic (and best) writing. Warfield works his way surely and artistically from the opening *In der Fremde* ("Aus der Heimat") on through to the closing *Frühlingsnacht*. His performance is marked by understanding, intelligent musicianship and astonishingly good German diction.

The *Four Serious Songs* of Brahms have been recorded many times before (this is the sixth LP recording), but it is doubtful whether they have ever been sung with more artistry than is evinced here. William Warfield demonstrates the *savoir-faire* of the born *lieder* singer, and this atmosphere, coupled with his fine baritone, makes the disc one that can be highly recommended.

Columbia has come through nobly in the matter of texts—they supply German and English both on an extra page attached to the front of the jacket, an ingenious method that has much to recommend it. The recorded sound is good. W.

Josten: Songs. Sara Mae Endich (soprano) and William McGrath (tenor) accompanied by Werner Josten (piano). 1-12" disc (*SPA-34) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sumer is icumen in*; *Die verschwiegene Nachtigall*; *Die heiligen drei Könige*; *Rundelay*; *Gefunden*; *Hingabe*; *Lied*; *The Indian Serenade*; *La Partenze delle Rondinelle*; *Guarda, Che Bianca Luna*; *Frühlingsnetz*; *Im Herbst*; *Weihnachten*; *Waldeinsamkeit*.

This disc will serve to introduce three persons to the record buyer: Werner Josten, Sara Mae Endich and William McGrath. Composer Josten, born in Germany, came to this country in 1921 and several

years later became professor of music at Smith College, where he remained until 1949. During this time he distinguished himself in three roles, that of teacher, composer and producer of old operas, notably works by Monteverdi, Fux and Handel. It is as a composer that one considers Mr. Josten whose compositions were principally in the form of the song, although he has written in other forms. The fourteen songs on this record give, one assumes, a reasonable cross-section of his work in this genre and, while it is not great music, they are all musically and are occasionally touched with flashes of genuine poetry and fantasy. His taste in poetry is eclectic, ranging from the anonymous author of *Sumer is icumen in* through Goethe, Heine, Dryden, Shelley and von Eichendorff. The musical settings written for these varied poems are appropriate, original and, in the main, satisfying.

Of the two soloists, Miss Endich has the better vocal endowment, but McGrath is still a better than average tenor. Both sing with genuine feeling for the music; and Miss Endich, in particular, manages to convey an ecstatic quality at times that is very convincing.

Werner Josten's accompaniments must be considered definitive—they are certainly well played. In fact, the presence of the composer as a participating artist lends an air of authority to the recording that is so often missing from performances of contemporary music. He has been fortunate in his choice of soloists, and the disc is warmly recommended to all interested in music a little off the beaten track. Spa has furnished the English texts of the songs and good recording; but, for a record of this nature, a little information concerning the genesis of the music would not have been amiss.

W.

R. Strauss: (4) Last Songs. One side, and **R. Strauss: Capriccio, Op. 85**—Closing Scene. Elisabeth Schwartzkopf (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35084TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35084) \$5.95.

The *Four Last Songs* of Richard Strauss are presented here in somewhat fancier dress than they were on London's little "sleeper" sung by Lisa della Casa (TNR Feb. '54). Musically and artistically there is not much to choose from between the two versions. Elisabeth Schwartzkopf sings all four with rare expression and insight, both musical and poetic. The songs are among the finest of Strauss' considerable output, and with two such superior versions from which to choose the prospective buyer must consider "other sides."

The della Casa disc was a ten inch affair but now London has arranged to bring it out as a 12-inch disc backed up with excerpts from *Arabella* sung by Gueden, della Casa and Poell (*L-LL-856). The present Angel disc sports the final scene from *Capriccio*, and it features some more very fine singing and orchestral

playing by Schwartzkopf and Ackermann. Musically, however, *Capriccio* is mechanical and mannered—not nearly in a class with the songs.

The Angel packaging and recording are both excellent, although here again this writer preferred the London *ffrr* technique that gave more of an over-all effect, while the Angel recording engineers employ a "close up" method that has its merits in this instance since Miss Schwartzkopf is vocally able to stand such treatment (it might even enhance certain of her qualities).

If London keeps its ten inch version available it will be the best choice, in this writer's opinion. If not, the choice becomes more complicated, for there is considerable merit to both Schwartzkopf's and della Casa's singing of the *lieder* and little if any musical merit to the other sides. It is clearly a case of paying your money and taking your choice. W.

Chansons de la Belle Epoque (Vol. I). Germaine Montero (mezzo-soprano), Micheline Dax (soprano), Remi Clary (tenor), Aime Doniat (baritone) with orchestra conducted by M. Philippe-Gérard. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7008) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Tha-Ma-Ra-Boum-Di-Hé* (Montero); *Le Chat noir* (Clary); *Le Voyage à Robinson* (Dax); *Fermons nos rideaux* (Doniat); *Le Fiacre* (Dax); *Reviens* (Doniat); *Quand on vous aime comme ça* (Dax); *Madame Arthur* (Dax).

Chansons de la Belle Epoque (Vol. II). Germaine Montero (mezzo-soprano), Micheline Dax (soprano), Aime Doniat (baritone), Eric Amado (baritone) with orchestra conducted by M. Philippe-Gérard. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7011) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Quand l'amour meurt* (Doniat); *Frou-Frou* (Dax); *Valse-Brune* (Amado); *De Place en Place* (Dax); *Fleur de Blé-Noir* (Montero); *Su tu le veux* (Doniat); *La Paimpolaise* (Amado); *Le Temps des Cerises* (Amado).

Paris as well as New York and London had its "gay nineties" and the songs on the present pair of discs were popular in that city during the period which is known in France as "La Belle Epoque." If you would like to hear some ditties that grandfather heard when he slipped away from grandmother for a little night to himself in naughty Paris before the turn of the century, here they are.

ORGAN



Dupré: Symphony Passion, Op. 23. Clarence Waters, playing the organ at Trinity College Chapel, Hartford (Conn.). 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-1020) \$5.95.

Marcel Dupré's *Passion Symphony* had its inception at a recital which the composer gave at Wanamaker's, Philadelphia, in 1922. After improvising a symphony on submitted themes, the vision of a *Passion Symphony* took form, and Dupré noted down a

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓞ indicates 45 rpm.

few passages after the recital. It was not until 1924 that he found time to compose the work, and it was premiered at the opening of the new organ in Westminster Cathedral. This is a beautifully descriptive work in four sections: The World Awaiting the Saviour, Nativity, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. The themes which occur in the music are "Christe Redemptor Omnium," "Adeste Fideles," and "Adoro Te." Much of the music is clearly descriptive and pictorial, some of it is impressionistic, all of it is impressive and will give lovers of organ music genuine pleasure. Anyone who wants one representative organ recording of the late French school in his collection will find this good music and enjoyable to hear.

Clarence Watters, a recognized authority on French organ music, plays the *Passion Symphony* with an obvious understanding of the work and the idiom. He offers colorful and appropriate registration, and there is plenty of color and richness in this organ as we hear it so beautifully reproduced on this disc. Classic Editions maintains its position in the front rank of producers of organ records with this worthy addition to their comprehensive collection of French organ masterpieces. S.

Concert Music for Organ and Chimes. Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond, Jr., Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3066) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Carillon de Westminster* (Vierne); *Icarus* (Ellsasser); *St. Lawrence Sketches* (Russell).

Reubke: Sonata on the 94th Psalm. One side, and **Guilmant: Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 42.** Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond, Jr., Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGME-3078) \$4.85.

As an example of how the pipe organ is again taking its place in the front rank of solo instruments, we can cite the disc listed above as "Concert Music for Organ and Chimes." Such a title usually indicates a collection of salon ditties transcribed for organ and chimes, in which you would probably hear some mushy music tapped out on tubular chimes with a theatre-like accompaniment on the organ. This disc is far from such a travesty on the art of organ playing, for here we have some genuine classics of organ music, skillfully played on a fine concert instrument, with an occasional use of chimes as part of the registration of the score.

Alexander Russell's *St. Lawrence Sketches* have been a familiar part of the American organ repertoire ever since their composition in 1916 and are always a welcome part of any recital program. The four sections are titled: The Citadel at Quebec; The Bells of Ste. Anne de Beaupré; Song of the Basket Weaver; and Up the Saguenay. The second and third sections are often played separately and are lovely little tone poems for the noblest of instruments. Ellsasser's

Icarus is subtitled "A Tone Sketch after the poem by Earl Marlatt" which poem is a religious interpretation of the age-old Grecian story of Icarus who made himself wings to escape the material things of life, but when these wings of wax got too near the sun they melted, and Icarus fell into the sea. Louis Vierne's *Carillon de Westminster* has long been a concert favorite of ours, and it is good to hear it on records in the powerful performance by virtuoso Ellsasser. The elaborate *St. Lawrence Sketches* are, of course, the feature of the disc, and they are played with a flair for beauty and color by Ellsasser. The reproduction is very fine.

Our enthusiasm for the recording of the tremendous Reubke *Sonata* is quite tempered by the recent recording by Biggs (*C-ML-4820) which we so lavishly praised a couple of months ago. The magnificence of the Methuen organ and Biggs' masterly reading make this the preferred version by a substantial margin. Nor is the Guilmant *Sonata* as worthy a coupling as the Liszt compositions which are on Biggs' disc. S.

PIANO



Spanish Music. Amparo Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1788) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Spanish Dances Nos. 8, 9, & 12* (Granados); *Femmes d'Espagnole—L'Andalouse Sentimentale & La Brune Coquette* (Turina); *Pochades Andalouses—Danse Gitane, Aniers sur la route de Seville, Canto Flamenco, Tientos* (Infante); *Suite Espagnola—Granada* (Albéniz); *Cordoba* (Albéniz); *Valencian Danse* (Cuesta).

Spanish and Portuguese Keyboard Music. Felicia Blumental (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-769) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonatas in C-sharp minor & D* (Soler); *Aria in D minor* (Angles); *Sonata in D* (Albéniz); *Sonata in C minor* (Cantallós); *Sonatas in A minor & B-flat* (Seixas); *Toccata in E minor* (Seixas); *Toccata in G minor* (Carvalho); *Toccata in D minor* (Jacinto).

Falla: Piano Music (complete). José Echaniz (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5218) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *El Amor Brujo—Ritual Fire Dance, Recit du Pecheur, Dance of Terror, Pantomime; Three-Cornered Hat—Dance of the Miller's Wife, Dance of the Miller, Dance of the Corregidor; Valse Capriccio; Serenata Andaluza; Nocturno; Aragonesa; Cubana; Montañesa; Andaluza; Fantasia Baetica; Hommage à Dukas; Hommage* ("In Memory of Debussy").

Here at one time we have the release of a vast amount of Spanish keyboard music including one disc (*WEST-WL-5218) that contains all of the music that Manuel de Falla wrote for the piano,

played by his friend of long standing, José Echaniz. . . . The music on these three LP discs covers a period from the early 18th century to the present day. Discerning students of Spanish music will find much to interest them, we are very sure. It has been played by able artists and is well recorded.

Beethoven: (33) Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120. Julius Katchen (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-745) \$5.95.

Beethoven: (15) Eroica Variations in E-flat, Op. 35. Claudio Arrau (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4067) \$2.50.

Julius Katchen gives us a superb recording of Beethoven's *Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli* and thus we do not hesitate to recommend it highly. . . . Sorry we can't speak so well for the little Decca disc of Arrau's. It has a noisy surface which is most disconcerting.

Brahms: Sonata No. 2 in F-sharp minor, Op. 2. One side, and **Brahms: (6) Piano Pieces, Op. 118.** Joseph Battista (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3056) \$4.85.

Brahms: (7) Fantasias, Op. 116. One side, and **Brahms: (6) Piano Pieces, Op. 118.** Carl Seemann (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9667) \$5.85.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a ("St. Antoni Chorale"). One side, and **Brahms: (5) Waltzes for Two Pianos, Op. 39.** And **Schumann: Andante and Variations in B-flat, Op. 46.** Ethel Bartlett and Rae Robertson (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3027) \$4.85.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. One side, and **Bach: French Suite No. 5 in G.** And **Beethoven: (32) Variations in C minor.** Constance Keene (piano). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10138) \$4.85.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. Andor Földes (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7532) \$3.85.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. One side, and **Schumann: Etudes Symphoniques, Op. 13.** Geza Anda (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35046TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35046) \$5.95.

Of this vast batch of keyboard recordings that recently arrived at the studio all of it is satisfactorily represented in the present catalogs except Beethoven's (32) *Variations in C minor*. This dates from 1806-7, a period when Beethoven was composing some of his greatest works. However, these little Variations are of little consequence. It is said that on an occasion Beethoven heard someone playing them and inquired the composer's name. When told that he was the composer he said, "Such nonsense by me? O Beethoven, what an ass you were!" As far as we are concerned, they are very pleasant to listen to and should be represented in the recordings of the great master.

Lack of space does not permit us to more than announce that additional recorded versions of the other selections are now available.

Bartók: For Children (40 Pieces on Hungarian Folk Tunes). Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3009) \$4.85.

Bartók: For Children (1945) (17 excerpts). One side, and **Bartók: (7) Improvisations, Op. 20.** Carl Seemann (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4085) \$2.50.

Piano Music for Children. Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3010) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Music for Children, Op. 65* (Prokofiev); *(6) Children's Pieces* (Shostakovich); *Enfantines* (Bloch); *Touchez Blanches et Touchez Noires* (Milhaud); *Lullaby for Amittai* (Starer).

We have grouped together these three discs containing keyboard music for children. By and large they contain a vast number of little pieces that children will enjoy playing after they have mastered them—some are quite simple and others will require much patient practicing under the guidance of an able instructor. These are not records for grandma to give little Willie with the thought that they will entice him to want to take piano lessons. After little Willie has taken some lessons and shows some real aptitude, then it is time to introduce him to some of this music that the great composers of our day have written especially for earnest little students—small doses at a time are indicated.

Villa-Lobos: Rude Poeme. One side, and **Villa-Lobos: The Children's Doll Suite.** And **Villa-Lobos: The Three Maries.** Jacques Abram (piano). 1-12" disc (*EMS-10) \$5.95.

One of America's top pianists, Jacques Abram, has selected three fine works of Villa-Lobos for this LP disc. *Rude Poeme* is a large scale work abounding in broad melodies. It was dedicated to Artur Schnabel. The other two selections, *The Children's Doll Suite* and *The Three Maries* were inspired by the composer's love for children but are for adults. They are impressionistic in character and should hold much charm for the discerning collector of piano recordings of unusual interest. Very fine piano reproduction has been achieved by EMS.

Schubert: Sonata No. 21 in B-flat, Op. Posth. ("Grand"). One side, and **Schubert: Sonata No. 14 in A minor, Op. 143.** Friedrich Wuehrer (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8210) \$5.95.

Schubert: Sonata No. 16 in A minor, Op. 42. Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-792) \$5.95.

Schubert: (4) Impromptus, Op. 142. Clifford Curzon (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-720) \$5.95.

As there are satisfactory recordings of all of this Schubert piano music already available we can see no

particular reason for these additions. Curzon's recording of the (4) *Impromptus*, Op. 142 might be an exception. He gives sterling performances of these delightful little pieces, and while seven other versions are listed in the catalogs, it would not surprise us if quite a few music lovers would select his.

Rubinstein Plays Brahms. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1787) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Intermezzo in B-flat minor*, Op. 117, No. 2; *Capriccio in B minor*, Op. 76, No. 2; *Intermezzo in A*, Op. 118, No. 2; *Intermezzo in E minor*, Op. 119, No. 2; *Rhapsody in B minor*, Op. 79, No. 1; *Rhapsody in G minor*, Op. 79, No. 2; *Intermezzo in C-sharp minor*, Op. 117, No. 3; *Intermezzo in C*, Op. 119, No. 3; *Intermezzo in E-flat minor*, Op. 118, No. 6; *Rhapsody in E-flat*, Op. 119, No. 4.

For a lovely forty minutes or so of Brahms and Rubinstein this fine LP disc is indicated. There is an intimacy about this record that is thoroughly delightful. As we listened to it we had the feeling that Rubinstein had come to the studio and was playing these Brahms selections just for us. In no case did it seem that he was attempting to bring a huge audience to its feet with wild applause and cheers. We thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Debussy: (15) Pieces. Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35026TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35026) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Danse; Rêverie; (2) Arabesques; Nocturne; Valse Romantique; L'Isle Joyeuse; Le Petit Nègre; Masques; Danse Bohémienne; Ballade; Mazurka; La Plus que Lente; Berceuse Héroïque; Hommage à Haydn.*

Gieseking has a great host of admirers in this country, and we are very much of the opinion that the present LP disc containing performances of a group of Debussy pieces will be hailed by them with real enthusiasm. This disc contains Debussy and Gieseking, and that is enough for many American music lovers. We can report that the piano reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Debussy: (12) Preludes, Bk. I. Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35066TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35066) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Danseuses de Delphes; Voiles; Le Vent dans la Plaine; Les Sons et les Parfums Tournent dans l'Air du Soir; Les Collines d'Anacapri; Des Pas sur la Neige; Ca qu'a vu le Vent d'Ouest; La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin; La Sérénade interrompue; La Cathédrale engloutie; La Danse de Puck; Minstrels.*

Angel Records makes available this month Walter Gieseking's superb renditions of Debussy's (12) *Preludes, Book I*. With Angel's silent surfaces and most attractive factory-sealed jacket containing Baschet's famous portrait of the composer in colors, we

have a choice item indeed—one that lovers of the music of the great French impressionist should certainly cherish.



DICTION

Comedy in Music. Victor Borge (piano and talking). 1-12" disc (*C-CL-554) \$3.95.

We might guess that the editor had some uncertainty as to exactly under what heading to place this review; there is a small amount of piano-playing hereon, but those who might purchase this disc would do so because of the Great Dane's tremendous wit. When one considers that Borge by himself entertained packed theatres in his recent tour, one must admit that Borge has talent.

We have fractured not a few of our friends with this disc; Borge is well enough known from his radio and TV appearances so that you will know whether you think him funny. If you do, 'nuff said.

VIOLIN



Encores. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1742) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonata ("Il Trillo del Diavolo") (Tartini). Romanza Andaluza, Op. 22, Bk. II, No. 3; Malagueña, Op. 21, No. 1; Habañera, Op. 21, No. 2 (Sarasate). Pièce en forme de Habañera (Ravel). Scherzo-Tarantelle, Op. 16 (Wieniawski). Negro Spiritual Melody (Dvorák-Kreisler). Perpetuum mobile, Op. 5, No. 4 (Nováček). Caprice Viennois (Kreisler). Spanish Dance (Granados-Kreisler). Roumanian Folk Dances, Nos. 4/6 (Bartók).*

Yehudi Menuhin's host of admirers will doubtless welcome this attractive LP disc containing a group of short pieces that the master violinist has offered as encores to his concert audiences.



MISCELLANEOUS

Django Reinhardt Memorial (Vol. I). Django Reinhardt (guitar) with the Quintette of the Hot Club of France. 1-10" disc (*PE-SPL-1010) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Minor Swing, Swing 40, Heavy Artillery, Fly Fishing, Swing Guitar, Belleville, Sweet Atmosphere, Swing de Paris.*

Django Reinhardt first came to the writer's attention back in the late '30's or early '40's when a friend gave us a copy of *Shine* by the Quintette of the Hot Club of France; it has remained one of our favorite records to the present day, and it illustrated the tremendous swing technique of this three-fingered gypsy, Reinhardt (yes, he had only three fingers on his fingering hand). His death, early in 1953, robbed the world of jazz of one of its great personalities.

The present disc, consisting entirely of tunes com-

posed by Django, is a worthy tribute to him, illustrating his single-string technique as well as his rock-solid beat (hear especially *Fly Fishing*). The jacket does not state where these recordings came from, but some of them sound as though they were transferred from 78's; however, they are all modern recordings, and the reproduction is entirely satisfactory.

Sounds of the American Southwest. Recorded and edited by Charles M. Bogert, Dept. of Amphibians and Reptiles, Museum of Natural History, N. Y. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-FPX-122) \$6.95.

Here is another remarkable LP record in Folkways Records' "Science Series." It contains sounds of birds, toads, reptiles and insects in the Chiricahua Mountain and the Tucson Regions of America's great Southwest. These unique recordings were made on location by Mr. Charles M. Bogert of the staff of the Museum of Natural History (New York). Mr. Bogert has also written the very illuminating notes that will be found in the illustrated booklet that accompanies this disc.

Creole Songs of Haiti. Recorded on location. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-833) \$4.75.

Haitian Dances. Frantz Casseus (guitar). 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-822) \$4.75.

Euzkadi! (Songs and Dances of the Basque). Sung and played by Juan Onatibia. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-830) \$4.75.

Jewish Freilach Songs. Played and sung by "Prince" Nazarov, with octofone and accordion. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-809) \$4.75.

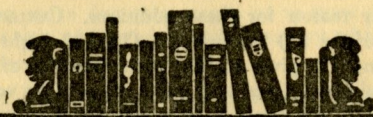
Jewish Folk Songs. Sung and played by Mark Olf. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-827) \$4.75.

African and Afro-American Drums. Recorded in Congo, Nigeria, Madagascar, Ruanda, South Africa, Surinam, West Indies, Brazil and U. S. A. 2-12" discs in album (*FOLK-P-502) \$12.90.

Japanese Buddhist Ritual. Recorded on location by Douglas G. Haring. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-449) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: Bells, Morning Prayers, Sambutsuka Hymns, Mt. Hiei Hymn, Memorial Service, Okagura Chant, Gongs, Drums.

Folkway Records has recently added to its ever-growing catalog of music of many lands, all of which is recorded by native artists, the LP discs listed above. As is the usual practice, this astute publisher supplies with each recording an illustrated booklet with most illuminating notes. These booklets bring, even to the person with very little knowledge of the music that the disc contains, an understanding and an appreciation of these esoteric selections.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, GSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.

Ø Indicates 45 rpm.

Amel, Belcher - 1. Pyre Dame p 12

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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JULY, 1954

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\$1 per year

WE might term the stack of discs in front of us this minute a "birdwatcher's bonanza," for we have no fewer than five new records of bird songs this month—well anyway, four new ones and one LP re-issue of Volume 2 of *American Bird Songs*, issued by Cornell University Press and reviewed in THE NEW RECORDS in September 1951 when the 78 rpm version was issued. Formerly on five 12-inch discs, Vol. 2 is now available on one 12-inch LP disc at \$7.75; Volume 1 of *American Bird Songs* is still available on 78 rpm only, 6-10" discs in album, at \$8.93.

Cornell has also issued two 10-inch 78 rpm discs this month: *The Mockingbird Sings* ("The Natural Song of the Mockingbird, and His Imitations of the Songs of over Thirty Other Birds"); and *Western Bird Songs* ("The Voices of 10 Familiar Songbirds of Western North America, Recorded in Their Native Habitats"). *The Mockingbird Sings* is perfectly fascinating, featuring two different birds. The first one, singing the song distinctive of its species, was recorded by Dr. and Mrs. Peter Paul Kellogg in a Miami, Fla., garden. The second bird, a particularly talented New England Mockingbird, gives a glorious medley of songs and snatches of songs mimicking more than thirty other birds. It took three summers of patient recording by H. Vose Greenough, Jr., of the Technichord Laboratory, to capture on tape the thirty-two imitations. A commentary on the disc names each bird imitated. 1-10" 78 rpm Vinylite disc, \$2.50.

Western Bird Songs, as its name implies, is a recording of 10 of the best known Western Birds not generally known in the East; we presume that this disc, like Cornell's *Florida Bird Songs* (1-10" 78 rpm Vinylite disc, \$2.50), will have a rather limited geographic

appeal. It is 1-10" 78 rpm Vinylite disc, \$2.50.

Book Records, Inc. (New York) is the publisher of a "Soundbook" entitled *Songbirds of America in Color, Sound and Story*, "developed and published in cooperation with Cornell University Press." This is available either on one 10-inch LP disc or two 7-inch Extended Play 45 rpm discs; price \$4.95. The record(s) are bound in a most attractive book (thus the name "Soundbook") containing illustrations in full color of each of the 24 birds whose songs are recorded. Eight pages of foreword material are also given, telling of the habits, usefulness, migratory routes, and other interesting facts about the birds. There are articles on Recording Bird Songs, Photographing Birds, Attracting Birds, and a Bibliography for Further Study. The prospective birdwatcher is thus well armed for his task if he possesses this Soundbook, and we suggest that it would make a beautiful and most welcome gift for one's bird-loving friends. In ordering, please specify whether the LP (33-1/3 rpm) or 45 rpm version is desired; price, \$4.95 for either speed.

Jerry and Norma Stillwell have just released Volume 2 of *Bird Songs of Dooryard, Field and Forest* (See TNR Jan. '54) on one 12-inch LP disc. Volume 2 contains the calls of 58 species, and the Stillwells take turns giving the commentary which identifies each for the listener as he plays the disc. Like Vol. 1, this is a scholarly work, well done, and will help the student to identify hard-to-differentiate songs (e.g., the robin, summer tanager, scarlet tanager and rose-breasted grosbeak). 1-12" LP disc, \$7.95.

If any or all of these discs are not available from your local dealer, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for

back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-two years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning July 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Gluck: *Orpheus ed Euridice* (abridged). (Sung in Italian). Ferrier, Ayars, Vlachopoulos with Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Southern Philharmonic Orchestra—Stiedry. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-924) \$5.95. (TNR Mar. '48).

Thomson: *Four Saints in Three Acts* (abridged). (Sung in English). Soloists, double-chorus and orchestra—Thomson. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1139) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '48).

ORCHESTRA



Ives: *Symphony No. 2*. Vienna Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*SPA-39) \$5.95.

James: *Symphony No. 1*. Vienna Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*SPA-38) \$5.95.

Creston: *Symphony No. 2, Op. 35*. One side, and Creston: *Symphony No. 3, Op. 48*. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Mitchell. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5272) \$5.95.

All of the music in this group is enjoying first recordings—and nothing could be better than to have every one of these fine works available in LP recorded form. This is American music which is culled from the best of our output—no trivial, experimental, superficial nonsense in the lot. It is music which can be enjoyed for itself, without any sense of "listen to it as a duty to our native American composers."

As most music lovers have read, Charles Ives recently died. He was a unique figure among great composers in that he, early in life, decided not to depend on his music for a livelihood. He went into the insurance business, was very successful, and did his music on the side. Even though his *Second Symphony* is now fifty-odd years old, it shows Ives as an innovator and experimenter with dissonances somewhat in advance of Bartók, Milhaud, and others. The work is in five movements, culminating in a bold and effective *Allegro molto vivace* which Adler and the Viennese orchestra play with relish. The final passages will give you a surprise, even more so considering how long ago this was written.

Not quite so accessible is Philip James' *First Sym-*

phony, written in 1943. It is the product of a skillful musician and musical educator, but also a man of powerful musical ideas and a rather striking individuality. Repeated hearings define this a music of substance. It is a pity that SPA has such sketchy and insufficient data on their jacket covers. Both Ives and James could stand some illumination, other than the few biographical words spread over the page. Jacket notes don't have to sell the music, and some persons may not care to read them; but most serious-minded record collectors enjoy them and benefit from them—if they are informative and well written. This is one for "They'll Do It Every Time"; the Beethoven *Fifth* gets three columns of explanation, but the brand new repertoire gets a few paragraphs of biographical notes. On the credit side we might add both performances are good, and the reproduction is excellent.

A full length review could easily be written about the two Creston symphonies, and the superb performances they receive from young Dr. Howard Mitchell and the Washington (D.C.) National Symphony Orchestra. Anyone interested in American symphonic music will want to hear this fine disc. Westminster, by the way, joins SPA in this instance with a complete lack of program notes, their jacket cover being devoted to "Here's what the critics say about Creston's symphonies"—how useless can we get in this matter? The reproduction, while slightly deficient in resonance, is splendid in every other respect. S.

Honegger: *Symphony No. 2* (1941). One side, and Rivier: *Symphony No. 2* (1938). MGM String Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. 1-12" disc (*MGME-3104) \$4.85.

Honegger's *Symphony for String Orchestra* is a work that seems to be hewn from granite, a hard, biting, serious work, of continuous intensity. Written in Paris shortly after the Germans occupied the city in 1941 and completed within a few months, it reflects clearly the tragedy of fallen France; the quiet, angry waiting of her people; and the joyful triumph of the conquered in the end. In three movements, bound together by the pulse of the work, the third section is capped by an enormous chorale, a resounding announcement of victory, pounded out by a solo trumpet doubling the first violins over a boiling variant of the first theme of the movement. This work has a message which it states in unmistakable terms, giving the music a profile that is understandable, whether one likes it or not. A recording of this work belongs in the growing LP lists of Honegger's works, and the present recording is a brilliant accomplishment by the dynamic young conductor, Izler Solomon. MGM's reproduction is super hi-fi, extremely close-to and revealing of every sound in the studio; the inner grooves near the label tend to sizzle a bit on our set.

Jean Rivier appears in the LP lists for the first time with a major work, his *Symphony No. 2 for String Orchestra*. While not of the emotional content of Honegger's work discussed above, it is a workmanlike affair that is strictly middle-of-the-road as modern

music goes. Rivier is not too well known outside of France because his music has not the originality of Honegger or Milhaud; but he is a skilled musician with a fondness for string writing—four of his five published symphonies are designed for strings. The present work is dedicated to Charles Münch. Those who wonder where melody has got to in modern music will be interested to know that Rivier has stooped to this device here and there in his symphony, particularly in the expressive second movement *Adagio*. Is that why he is not a better known contemporary composer? Solomon and the orchestra perform this work with complete conviction. S.

When the Saints Go Marching In. Turk Murphy and His Jazz Band. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-546) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *St. Louis Blues*; *I Wished I Was in Peoria*; *Tishomingo Blues*; *Down in Jungle Town*; *How Come You Do Me Like You Do*; *Roll, Jordan, Roll*; *Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?*; *I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate*; *Santa Claus Blues*; *Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?*; *Evolution Mama*; *When the Saints Go Marching In*.

The Huckle-Buck and Robbins' Nest. A Buck Clayton Jam Session. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-548) \$3.95.

Jam Session Coast to Coast. Eddie Condon's All-Stars and The Rampart Street Paraders. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-547) \$3.95.

BY CONDON: *Beale Street Blues*; *Emaline*; *Don't Worry 'Bout Me*; *I Can't Give You Anything but Love*; *Riverboat Shuffle*; *Jam Session Blues*; *Ole Miss*.

BY RAMPART STREET PARADERS: *I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None o' This Jelly Roll*; *Squeeze Me*; *Ja-da*; *Black and Blue*; *The Sheik of Araby*; *South Rampart Street Parade*.

Readers are referred to our April 1953 issue wherein, reviewing an LP disc entitled *Ellington Uptown*, we commented upon the importance of the phonograph record to jazz and explained why much of the best jazz music had only poor to fair reproduction.

Here, then, are three LP's, each representing a different type of jazz, all super hi-fi. Although the music that emanates from the Turk Murphy disc may not please some (it didn't please us), one cannot deny that the boys were having a swell time; and the choice of numbers is above reproach. We can best describe this outfit as neo-dixieland: Turk Murphy (trombone); Bob Helm (clarinet); Bob Short (trumpet & tuba); Wally Rose (piano); Dick Lammi (banjo); Freddie Crewes (tuba); with vocals by Turk and Bob Helm.

The second disc listed above is quite remarkable and shows what LP has done for jazz, helping to eliminate the time element from spontaneous sessions. When players start to "jam" (i. e., improvise together), they often take longer than 3 or 4 minutes to "get loose" and reach a climax; when cutting sides in the old 78 rpm days, 3 or 4 minutes was all they

had. Here we have Buck Clayton's boys taking 63 consecutive choruses on *Huckle-Buck*—quite a remarkable thing—and 16 choruses on *Robbins' Nest*. One can hear the "loosening" as the side progresses. Good jazz by great players: Buck Clayton, Joe Newman (trumpets); Urbie Green, Henderson Chambers (trombones); Lem Davis (alto sax); Julian Dash (tenor sax); Charlie Fowlkes (baritone sax); Sir Charles Thompson (piano); Freddie Green (guitar); Walter Page (bass); Jo Jones (drums).

The point of the third disc is that it contains, on one side, a session by a New York group (Condon's) and a session by a Hollywood gang (So. Rampart St. Paraders) on the other. Eddie Condon has always been our idea of a musician's musician, and his inspiration is, it seemed to us, deeply felt on his side of the disc; we venture to say that the same men, less Condon, would not play with half the spirit. Yet the jazz audiophile will say (we feel sure) that the men on one side are as good as the players on the other. Condon's gang consists of: Eddie Condon (guitar); "Wild" Bill Davidson (cornet); Cutty Cutshall (trombone); Edmond Hall (clarinet); Gene Schroeder (piano); Walter Page (bass); Cliff Leeman (drums); Lou McGarity (trombone); George Wettling (drums); Peanuts Hucko (clarinet); Dick Cary (piano & trumpet). (Not all of these men play on every number, which accounts for the apparent duplication). The West Coast band is composed of: Eddie Miller (tenor sax); Matty Matlock (clarinet); Clyde Hurley (trumpet); Abe Lincoln (trombone); Stan Wrightsman (piano); George van Eps (guitar); Phil Stephens (bass); Nick Fatool (drums).

Jazz collectors should investigate all of these records, for they are all, of their type, great (the reservations with respect to Turk Murphy are admittedly personal); and the reproduction is the most!

J.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-967) \$5.95.

In December 1953 these columns offered the highest praise to the new Mercury disc by Paul Paray and the Detroit Orchestra, both for their reading of this beloved romantic masterpiece and also for the superb reproduction of that disc. Fortunately for us, it is possible to lavish a lot of praise on this new Furtwängler disc and to recommend it too, without retracting anything previously said about the Paray disc. Strange as it may seem, Furtwängler plays this work along the most conventional and traditional lines, with virtually no personal twists or odd notions of his own which we often find in his readings of the standard repertoire. This is not to say that the performance is not a careful one; it is typical of Furtwängler in the marvelous dynamic levels, shadings, and the polished orchestral playing. The reproduction is rich in texture, good in detail and well balanced, yielding a beautiful over-all sound. Paul Paray

performs this symphony with a freshness and excitement that is rarely heard in this work. There is an urgency and an inspiration that to us was very commanding. If you wish to compare these two readings, you will find it well worth the time; for these two men each have an entirely different approach to the score. Therefore, depending on how you prefer your Franck played, both of these discs can be recommended; our preference remains for Paray.

Considering Furtwängler's fabulous success throughout the world and that he is recognized as one of the very greatest among present day conductors, it seems strange that we do not have the opportunity of hearing him in person with some of our great American orchestras. His unique talents could play upon these virtuoso ensembles with fine effect—and some of them would doubtless benefit from the experience. S.

R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. And **R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20.** One side, and **R. Strauss: Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme Suite, Op. 60.** Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4800) \$5.95.

Richard Strauss fans will certainly like this one! It contains good performances and splendid recordings of three of this famous composer's best known selections.

Moussorgsky—arr. Ravel: Pictures at an Exhibition. One and one-half sides, and **Ravel: La Valse.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-956) \$5.95.

If ever there was an embarrassment of richness in LP duplications, it is in the Moussorgsky-Ravel *Pictures at an Exhibition*, for we now have at least three absolutely top drawer LP's of this marvelous orchestral showpiece. The three which we think are the best are Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (*C-ML-4700), Kubelik and the Chicago Orchestra (*ME-MG-50000), and the present disc by Ansermet. Cantelli on RCA and Dorati on Epic, as well as one or two others, have many followers; but we think the three mentioned above are clearly the cream of the crop. Which of the three is preferable is no easy job to decide, for they are all of an uncommon level of excellence; yet there are many differences among them.

Reproduction-wise we found the Columbia had the best bass, the London the highest highs, but the Mercury had the best over-all range and quality. London's highs are terrific—clean and clear, but Mercury's full orchestra sound and their string section tone was the most impressive. Mercury has a perspective of the whole orchestra as well as a close presence of the solo instruments and percussions that is hard to better. Columbia's range and quality, except for the bass, are not as good as the other two by comparison (despite the gorgeous tonal quality of the

orchestra).

Performance-wise these three are all somewhat different. Generally speaking, Ansermet favors tempos which seem quite slow and deliberate compared with Ormandy or Kubelik. Ansermet drives magnificent masses of tone and builds gigantic climaxes. Kubelik and Ormandy are not found lacking in masses of orchestral tone, and they keep things moving along at a pace more popularly favored, without slighting details. We would advise hearing Ansermet before buying to be sure his conception of the score is not too draggy for your taste. The second side filler of his disc is devoted to a carefully detailed reading of *La Valse*, with which most folks are familiar from the previous pressing. S.

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker, Op. 71 (complete ballet). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati, with the University of Minnesota Chamber Singers directed by James Aliferis. 2-12" discs in album (*ME-OL-2-101) \$13.90.

This album represents a thoroughly admirable accomplishment from every standpoint. To begin with, the idea of recording a complete Nutcracker Ballet is not only a good idea, but one long overdue. Considering the great popularity of the Nutcracker Suite, the complete ballet should have some commercial possibility, aside from its artistic value. Two LP's previously have presented a "second suite," but they lacked appeal because of their unfamiliarity. With the complete ballet, however, we have the advantage of continuity, a wonderful musical picture describing the charming story of the ballet; and the familiar excerpts occurring at intervals during the score. It must be admitted that some sections of the ballet are hardly great or distinguished music in themselves, but as part of the descriptive music they all merge into a fine work. We were captivated with the music as it progressed and found much to admire in the complete score.

Mercury has spared nothing in lavishing all its resources in producing this set. The album is a deluxe affair with eight pages of notes and drawings—drawings of merit and imagination—everything very gay and colorful. Its technicians have achieved the finest reproduction yet heard on Olympian Series, which is the highest praise we can bestow upon the set; it is just magnificent! And finally, the most credit must go to Antal Dorati and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra for a performance of solid values. Dorati achieves a balance among all elements of the music and manages a continuity that keeps listener interest alive. His handling of the score is a masterly job, and he has been well groomed over the years of ballet experience for just such an accomplishment as this. It would be hard to imagine a finer performance, recording, and packaging of this music, which is something many folks are going to discover, with a thrill, and enjoy many times. S.

Vienna Philharmonic New Year Concert, 1954. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-970) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *An der schönen blauen Donau* (Strauss); *Auf Ferienreisen* (Josef Strauss); *Bei uns z'haus* (Strauss); *Sphärenklänge* (Josef Strauss); *Annen Polka* (Strauss); *Plappermaulchen* (Josef Strauss); *Radetzky March* (Johann Strauss, Sr.).

The world was saddened, a short while ago, to learn of the sudden death of Clemens Krauss, the great Viennese conductor. We were delighted, however, to note that he had lived to record this, the third of London's series of "Vienna Philharmonic New Year Concerts." Owners of the first two volumes will surely want the third; others will find that Krauss had no peer at this sort of thing—if you want some light music, here it is with all the trimmings.

Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98. Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9717) \$5.85.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 ("Scotch"). One side, and **Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 107 ("Reformation").** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4864) \$5.95.

Here is a fine recording of the great *Fourth* Symphony of Brahms, and nothing could be more pleasing than to praise this disc—the work of an American-born and wholly American-trained conductor, directing one of our major symphony orchestras (the Stadium Orchestra is virtually the New York Philharmonic). Leonard Bernstein, born in Massachusetts, has studied at Harvard under Piston and Hill, at Curtis under Reiner and Thompson, and later became a pupil of Koussevitzky. He has been assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic and has been associated with the Berkshire Music Center, and now heads its conducting department. He has conducted in the principal capitals of Europe and elsewhere. He is known as a distinguished composer of ballet and other classical forms as well as of the fine score for the Broadway production of "Wonderful Town."

Bernstein's approach to the *Fourth* is clearly along traditional and conventional lines, aiming for an honest statement of the score with a proper regard for the monumental composition that it is. His reading may be compared fairly with any in the LP catalog, and it may be compared favorably with most of them. A beforehand knowledge of just who is conducting is deceptive in evaluating a performance. We would hate to take a "blindfold" test on the Brahms *Fourth* LP's, for we may prefer Bernstein to Weingartner or Walter or Münch or Toscanini, far more seasoned and celebrated conductors. Bernstein's reading is indeed admirable, and Decca's reproduction (made at Carnegie Hall) is

one of their best American recordings, with notably good balance and quality.

For all around good performance, recording, and value, the pair of Mendelssohn symphonies conducted by Mitropoulos would be hard to beat. The conductor is entirely successful in both works, including what many folks will feel is the best "Reformation" yet recorded. Each work is complete on one side, which should give some manufacturers something to think about, and the recorded quality remains good; in fact, the reproduction of this disc is of the very best by today's standards. We could offer nothing but praise for this record and give it our highest recommendation. S.

Sibelius: Finlandia. Göteborg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sixten Eckerberg. One side, and **Chabrier: España** (Rhapsody for Orchestra). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-10" disc (*CL-H-8138) \$2.98.

Chabrier: Suite Pastorale. One side, and **Bizet: Jeux d'Enfants, Op. 22.** And **Bizet: La Jolie Fille de Perth Suite.** L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Edouard Lindenberg. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-871) \$5.95.

There is nothing outstanding about either of these discs. All of the music contained on them is already represented in the catalogs with satisfactory recordings. The Capitol disc might look like a bargain at \$2.98, but it really isn't because both sides of it are more than half blank. Both selections could very easily have been placed on one side of this 10-inch LP.

Sigmund Romberg Favorites. Hollywood Bowl "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Johnny Green. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9665) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *The Student Prince*—selections; *Viennese Nights Waltzes*; *American Humoresque*; *Tyrolean Woodchopper's March*; *Blossom Time*—selections; *Faithfully Yours*; *My Maryland*—selections.

The label does not so state, but we presume that these Romberg selections have been arranged by Johnny Green of "Body and Soul" fame and presently General Musical Director at M-G-M. As for ourselves we would prefer them as they were written, and we would also like them better if they had been performed by a smaller orchestra. This is purely a personal preference; some folks like fancy arrangements of popular tunes played by an orchestra of some ninety or more players.

Rossini: Guglielmo Tell—Overture. One side, and **Rossini: Semiramide—Overture.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-10" disc (*V-LRM-7054) \$2.99.

In November 1939 RCA Victor issued the Maestro's version of the *William Tell Overture*, and TNR had this to say: "If you wish a recording of

this musical 'war horse,' here it is, and our blessings on you, for you could not get a better one." We were, indeed, prophetic, for the older version was kept in the Victor catalog and even made the LP lists as *V-LM-14. Now, in case The Lone Ranger's present fans grow up to be hi-fi enthusiasts, Signor Toscanini runs through the *William Tell Overture* again, backed with the overture to *Semiramide*, with all the pyrotechnics RCA's engineers can reproduce. Which, by the way, are considerable!

In a Monastery Garden. Rochester Pops Orchestra conducted by Morton Gould. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-47) \$2.85.

CONTENTS: *In a Monastery Garden, In a Persian Market, In a Chinese Temple-Garden, The Clock and the Dresden Figures* (Ketelbey).

Here is Ketelbey all dolled up à la Morton Gould with sizzling high fidelity. **ASIDE TO DEALERS:** Next time you have a customer asking for *In a Persian Market*, drag out this disc; you'll sell it every time.

CONCERTO



Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18. Geza Anda (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. One and one-half sides, and **Rachmaninoff: Prelude in G, Op. 32, No. 5.** And **Rachmaninoff: Prelude in G minor, Op. 23, No. 5.** Geza Anda (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35093TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35093) \$5.95.

Schnabel: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. Helen Schnabel (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. One side, and **Schnabel: (10) Songs.** (Sung in German). Erika Francoulon (soprano) accompanied by Helen Schnabel (piano). 1-12" disc (*SPA-55) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Waldnacht; Sieh mein Kind ich gehe; Tanzlied; Das Veilchen an den spanischen Flieder; Dann; Frühlingslied; Marienlied; Dieses ist ein rechter Morgen; Hyazinthen; Die Sperlinge.*

Geza Anda, a man in his early thirties, is getting the buildup on Angel label, and Angel is giving him some choice plums in the warhorse repertoire. His European reputation is coming to us via records, as so often happens these days with Continental artists. He is a pianist who is definitely easy on the ears; possessed of a facile technique, good tone, and lovely quiet effects; and whose interpretive ideas are traditional rather than irrational when dealing with well-worn works. He and his conductor, Alceo Galliera, conspire to do no malice to the familiar magic of the Rachmaninoff *Second*, and they indeed manage to perform it with a romantic sweep entirely appropriate, without overdoing it. More splash may be found in the readings by some of the better known name artists on LP; but for a good, idiomatic

performance, blessed with the best of today's reproduction, this is an attractive disc. And Angel is not stingy with the minutes of music they serve, for rather than spread it on thinly over the last side they serve up two encores by artist Anda. And they left out the too-often played *Prelude in C-sharp minor*, offering instead the *G major* and *G minor Preludes*, for which we offer our profound thanks on this hot afternoon of long record re-viewing.

The eminent pianist, the late Artur Schnabel, was also a composer whose works are heard but occasionally. The *Piano Concerto* was written in 1901 and is influenced by the style of Richard Strauss; it was played frequently in Germany in the Twenties. It is in two movements, titled *Intermezzo* and *Rondo*. Schnabel liked the theme of the *Rondo* so much that he used it again in his *Third Symphony*, where, however, it is embedded in the atonal style of all of his compositions written after 1914. The concerto is a pleasant work, with which lovers of piano concerti will necessarily have to accept, on the obverse, Ten Songs, and about which they will be in the dark unless they understand German, for only the German text appears on the jacket cover. We were in the dark, and can only state that they sounded like pretty good songs to us, for what that may be worth. Helen Schnabel is at the piano on both sides of the disc and does fine work; orchestra is good, reproduction is standard, and soprano Francoulon is well above average. S.

Vivaldi: La Stravaganza, Op. 4 (12 Concerti for Violin, Strings and Continuo). Reinhold Barchet (violin) with the Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt, with Helma Elsner (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album (*VX-DL-103) \$19.95.

Vivaldi: (4) Concerti. Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9679) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Concerto in D minor for Viola d'Amore, Strings and Cembalo; Concerto in B-flat for Strings and Harpsichord; Concerto in C for Violin, 2 Cellos, Strings and Harpsichord; Concerto in D minor for Oboe, Strings and Harpsichord.*

One is impressed simply by picking up a copy of *La Stravaganza*, for here is an example of the *nth* degree in packaging: three 12-inch glassy smooth LP's in an album with blue padded covers, containing a 36-page booklet with a fine essay on Vivaldi and *La Stravaganza* (giving instrumentation, principal themes, key signatures, etc.), the whole housed in a substantial fiber-board box. One just knows that what awaits him inside will be simply wonderful.

And it is! For here is a first complete recording that deserves a wide hearing. The same forces that gave us the beautiful *L'Estro Armonico* (TNR June '52) have now joined together again in a manner

to make the critics rave. The variety of Italianate melodies of Vivaldi are a joy to hear; and the crispness of the reproduction serves to make them the more enjoyable. If you are one who objects to the "sameness" of Vivaldi, we suggest that you play these twelve concerti straight through from beginning to end (sip some iced tea at the same time, if you like). Notice that each one seems more elegant than the last, working, as it were, to a climax. There are not many composers who can hold our interest for better than two consecutive hours (with iced tea or what have you); but we missed our train on this one—we just couldn't leave the studio. Recommended on all counts: performance, material, reproduction and packaging.

The disc by the Virtuosi di Roma is entitled "Music of Vivaldi, Volume 2" and follows, naturally, Volume 1 (TNR May '52). The reproduction is less brilliant than the Vox recording just discussed and, therefore, not so appealing to us (although you may well prefer this mellower sound). There's no denying the excellence of these great musicians, and if you liked Volume 1, Volume 2 is more of the same.

J.

Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-911) \$5.95.

In April we went way out on the limb with a highly enthusiastic review of a new disc by Serkin and Szell (*C-ML-4829) of the Brahms *First Concerto*, for it appealed to us as no other performance of this work had previously. The *First* is not the easiest nut to crack, and it has never enjoyed a popularity as boundless as the Brahms *Second* or the other well known romantic concertos. London seems to have plenty of courage when it comes to competing with itself, for it has now issued its second disc of this work in half a year, the other one being a good performance by Curzon and van Beinum (*L-LL-850). Ours not to reason why, we just write the reviews; and when an imposing artist like Backhaus records, we write whether it is the first recording or the umpteenth. We would imagine that this is part of a project which will include all the Beethoven and all the Brahms concertos by Backhaus, a worthy project indeed! This giant among present day pianists is commanding more respect every day; his recent appearance in New York is an example. His reading of the Brahms *First* is built along solid lines, large-scaled, and with a ring of conviction as well as authority. In these respects it may outclass Curzon, although his greater nimbleness on the keyboard is apparent. The Vienna Philharmonic under Böhm does not outclass Curzon's accompaniment by van Beinum and his excellent Amsterdam Orchestra, to say nothing of "razor-edged" Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, whose accompaniment for Serkin is the best of the lot.

In matters of reproduction, the present disc by Backhaus is good, but not outstanding among London's current output; it has a rather dark and fluffy quality which we think makes it not as good as the Curzon disc. As matters now stand, our preference is still for the Serkin-Szell disc; you may find it advisable to sample also Curzon and Backhaus before choosing. S.

Moszkowski: Concerto in E, Op. 59. Hannes Kann (piano) with the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1197) \$5.95.

Moritz Moszkowski is known to most pianists as a composer of small forms: a vast number of little salon pieces, the variety and mood of which was nearly inexhaustible, and a large quantity of four-hand music. It comes as a surprise to hear this concerto, written with such skill and sureness, a work in large form—a neglected work that comes off with a flourish. It is no earth-shaking masterpiece, nor does it pretend to be. It has honest values which remain on their own level and do not become bombastic. Moszkowski was a virtuoso pianist, and he knew, through familiarity with the concerto repertoire, every trick in the musician's bag; and he knew how to use them. This work moves along from the opening bar to the finale with a sureness that is truly surprising. Not only is this true of the piano part, but it holds equally for the orchestral score.

Hannes Kann, Viennese born and trained, started concertising in 1946 and has garnered quite a reputation for himself throughout Europe. His performance of this work is a brilliant bit of piano playing, displaying a dazzling technique, pearly passage work and rippling arpeggios that are a drawing room or concert hall delight. Goehr and the orchestra provide a good orchestral background, and the reproduction is good. We would not give the impression that this is a record of great importance, but it is a mighty pleasant diversion among the piano concerto repertoire, a very interesting first recording. S.

Grieg: Concerto in A minor, Op. 16. One side, and **Falla: Nights in the Gardens of Spain.** Guiomar Novães (piano) with the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8520) \$5.95.

If you think of the Grieg *Piano Concerto* as a real, full-blown, romantic piano concerto, and if you like to hear it played with tremendous breadth and great, sweeping effect, this disc is your dish; you will revel in every minute of its superbly reproduced performance. We have listened to all of Guiomar Novães' recordings during the past couple of years, and have considered every one of them well played, some of them winning first place among all others recording the same work. She is one of the most respected pianists of our time, acknowledged the greatest of the women pianists and considered a model of good

interpretive taste in whatever she plays. It does our heart good to hear her tackle this thrice-familiar work and play with an expansiveness that makes no compromise with either popular "speed up the old war horses" tendencies or with accepted matters of taste and tradition. This is just simply a magnificent reading of a beautiful concerto. Hans Swarowsky and the Vienna Pro Musica Symphony provide an accompaniment perfectly geared to Mme. Noväes broad conception of the music, and the reproduction is big and revealing. There are other versions on LP, many of them highly respected performances, but we will not venture a point by point comparison; suffice it to say that none offer a more thrilling listening experience than Mme. Noväes, and none enjoy better reproduction.

Considering the exquisite beauties in the score of Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* and its rather wide acceptance, this is but the third recording by a major artist to enter the LP lists. It has sharper, more modern reproduction than either the Rubinstein or Curzon discs, and the performance by Mme. Noväes is a match for either of the others. We think the orchestra does an admirable job with the rather impressionistic (at times) score, a most important part of the work, for the piano is actually a member of the orchestra rather than an outright solo instrument. This disc is therefore a fine value, with two major works—nearly an hour of splendid music making.

S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 23 in A, K. 488. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491.** Clifford Curzon (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-918) \$5.95.

Of the many recorded versions of these two Mozart concertos that are presently available, we would surely choose this disc by Curzon and the London Symphony. It is the only one that contains both of them; other recordings of them are coupled with other Mozart concertos. It seems to us that Nos. 23 and 24 make a fine combination—No. 23 is a gay and happy work, and it contrasts nicely with No. 24, a rather moody, one might say tragic selection.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Bach: Sonata No. 2 in D. One side, and **Prokofiev: Sonata, Op. 119.** Gregor Piatigorsky (violin) and Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1792) \$5.95.

Readers who might wonder at the unusual coupling of Bach and Prokofiev should hear this disc; the selections are not at all incongruous. Piatigorsky tried, we feel, to show the compatibility of the old and the new—that greatness in music has no connection with time. We are not saying that Prokofiev was as great as Bach; rather, that both were musical geniuses and that when both had something to say (musically), it does no violence to either to hear them consecutively.

CHORAL



Handel: Belshazzar (complete). Sung in German). Friederike Sailer (soprano); Franz Fehrer (tenor); Hanne Münch, Helene Metz (contraltos); Robert Titze (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of the State Conservatory of Music (Stuttgart) conducted by Hans Grischkat. 2-12" discs in folder (*PE-SPL-594) \$11.90.

Handel: Belshazzar (complete). Sung in German). Werner Liebing (tenor); Edith Laux (soprano); Armine Müller (contralto); Emil Friedrich (baritone); Edward Alsen (bass); combined Berlin Chamber Choirs and Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Helmut Koch. 2-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-534/5) \$11.90.

Handel's oratorio *Belshazzar* (or *Beltshazzar* as it was originally called) has never been recorded before; and, true to a tradition that seems to have come into being with the advent of LP, we don't start off with one but with two versions.

To begin with, little seems to be known about this score of Handel's, and this despite quite extensive musicological research. There has been published recently, however, a "symposium" on Handel's music edited by Gerald Abraham that might throw some light on editions, performances, etc. Quite frankly, these two recordings seem to be the result of someone's saying "Let's record Handel's *Belshazzar* this morning." Nothing more than that seems to have gone into their preparation.

The Bach Guild performance and presentation is more ostentatious, but a considerable portion of the score has been cut. To Bach Guild's credit is the fact that they indicate the cuts and summarize the missing action in the libretto. They also mention that the Chrysander edition of 1864 was used. Period does not mention its sources; they are presumably the same as Bach Guild's, but much more of the music is contained on the same number records.

As to soloists, they are usually adequate, although in no instance are they inspired. Friederike Sailer (Period's Nitocris) has the best voice, although she sounds somewhat youthful to be the mother of Belshazzar. Daniel is sung by a baritone in the Bach Guild set, while an alto (Helene Metz) is used in the Period recording. The first performance featured the redoubtable Mrs. Cibber in this part, so Period seems to be sticking closer to Handel's original. Not having any authentic sources and not much information being vouchsafed by the recording companies, both the reveiwer and the purchaser are left pretty much in the dark.

Personal taste inclines the writer towards the Period set—there is more of the music and Hans Grischkat has been the conductor in the past, of some very fine performances, so one is inclined to trust him in this instance. Helmut Koch has also done some fine phonographic work but is a little less known (by his fruits) to the writer. Recorded sound, in

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓢ indicates 45 rpm.

both instances, is easy to take, and libretti are supplied with each set. W.

Benevoli: Festmesse für 53 Stimmen ("Festival Mass in 53 Parts"). (Sung in Latin). One and one-half sides, and **Benevoli: St. Ruperti Hymnus**. (Sung in Latin). Soloists, Salzburger Domchoir and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Joseph Messner, with Franz Sauer (organ). 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3035) \$5.95.

How often has one heard of a piece of music and thought "If I could only hear it, how wonderful it would be." Well, the writer entertained such notions about Benevoli's *Mass* after having read of it in the various histories of music. Now, having heard it, he is sorely puzzled—something went wrong somewhere—or else those who wrote of it never heard it, either, but only saw the score, which is a very different thing.

This *Festmesse*, for those who haven't heard of it, is a gigantic affair, so called "colossal-baroque" with a score of 54 staves or lines. The manuscript paper on which it was written measures 2 feet long and 1 foot 10 inches in width. Briefly, it calls for two eight-part choruses, each with *continuo*; and six instrumental ensembles: two for strings, one for woodwinds and three for brass instruments. There are also four "solo" quartets! Obviously it calls for great forces, both vocal and instrumental. It was written for the dedication of a new Cathedral in Salzburg in 1628 and was sung there on the 25th of September of that year.

Does all this whet your appetite or arouse your curiosity? Well, now you can hear it if you want to. This writer felt let down not only by the music but also by the quality of the recorded sound. Perhaps the two cannot be separated, for it is difficult to appraise a performance where the recording is muddy and confused. One strongly suspects an "actual performance" recording; certainly the conditions were far from ideal. Musically the *Mass* is a pompous, overblown work that, insofar as this performance is concerned, has little interest. It is impossible to tell much about the soloists or other musicians because of the recording techniques in effect at the time the tapes were made. Roy Klaus' notes are excellent but, unfortunately, no indication of the size and strength of the forces used is given.

Benevoli's *Festmesse für 53 Stimmen* was a real disappointment for at least one listener. The *St. Ruperti Hymnus* is cut from the same cloth. W.

OPERA

Gounod: Roméo et Juliette (complete). (Sung in French). Janine Micheau (soprano); Raoul Jobin (tenor); supporting soloists; Chorus and Orchestra of Théâtre national de l'Opéra (Paris) conducted by Alberto Erede. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-18) \$17.85.

There are many operas in music history that have

made their reputation via singers—operas whose existences were justified by famous casts. Such scores as those for *La Cenerentola*, *I Puritani*, to mention but the first two that come to mind, are in this category, as is Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* just given its first "complete" recording by London.

In the "Golden Age" of opera, the days of Eames, Melba, the de Reszkes, La Salle, Plançon and Montariol, *Roméo et Juliette* was a deservedly popular favorite. Not too much violence has been done to Shakespeare's great play, Gounod's tunes are delightful and curiously *à propos*—it is a more closely integrated score than *Faust*, and while the main characters remain two-dimensional, the work has its moments.

London's cast is one of unequal merit. By some strange quirk the best singing is done by the only non-French member of the cast, Heinz Rehfuss as Friar Laurence. Janine Micheau as Juliette gets off to a poor start but warms up half way through the *Waltz Song* and then sings very acceptably for the rest of the opera. Paul Cambon disappoints as Capulet; his bravura aria *Allons, jeunes gens!* is labored and consequently devoid of expression. Mercutio, to whom falls the delicious Queen Mab aria (the influence of Berlioz' scherzo is noticeable here as are other touches throughout the score—Gounod was no one's fool and could learn with and from the best of them), is well sung by Pierre Mollet, a good baritone. Finally, one must consider the uneven performance turned in by Raoul Jobin. There are moments when he sings very sweetly (as *Roméo* should); these are the mezza-voce moments. On the other hand, when he gets above a G he begins to have trouble. As a characterization, Jobin's version of Shakespeare's immortal lover is on the tame side and lacking in distinction.

Erede's direction is vigorous and crisp—well suited to the music. London's recording is good, and the inclusion of the ballet music was a happy thought. The inclusion of a libretto that was suited to the recorded performance would also have been a good idea. As it is, the one supplied omits much that is sung and its old fashioned, labored English has an air of the '90's about it. W.

Moussorgsky: The Marriage. (Sung in Russian). Charlotte Desmazes (contralto), Jean Mollien (tenor), Nicolas Agroff (bass-baritone) and Alexandre Popovitzky (bass) with l'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-36) \$5.95.

There is nothing more exasperating to this reviewer than to be confronted with a disc such as this one. Simply entitled *The Marriage* by Moussorgsky, the jacket notes offer nothing more than a finely printed, slangy English version of the first act of Gogol's play; and since the piece is sung in Russian, that is of no use. A little investigation uncovers the fact that the work was orchestrated by Antoine Duhamel (whoever he may be) and further research



discloses that, in 1868, Moussorgsky made an experiment in what he described as "opera dialogue." He attempted to set to music, just as it stood, the prose text of Gogol's comedy *The Matchmakers*. He abandoned the idea after completing the first act. One assumes that this Oceanic *The Marriage* is Moussorgsky's setting of Gogol's *The Matchmakers*.

So much for the history of the piece. As to its musical merit one needs only point out that it was experimental and was left unfinished. If Moussorgsky took what may be politely described as a dim view of his work, it hardly seems worth while to offer it as an ostensibly complete work. There is certainly nothing about it that merits such attention. The singers are of that all too common type that seems to be thronging the European (and some American) recording studios nowadays—mediocre voices that wouldn't have rated ten or fifteen years ago. Aggroff, in particular, sings as if he had a mouthful of potatoes (hot), and the others are not much better. The "opera" is as dull as ditchwater; and it is supposed to be a comedy!

It is hard to understand how a conductor of Leibowitz' ability and general musicianship came to be associated with such a dubious project. The recording is adequate. W.

Wagner: Lohengrin (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, NWDR Symphony Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Wilhelm Schüchter. 4-12" discs in album (manual sequence only) (*HMV-1095/8) \$27.80.

Henry the FowlerGottlob Frick (bs)
LohengrinRudolf Schock (t)
ElsaMaud Cunitz (s)
Friedrich of Telramund....Josef Metternich (bs)
OrtrudMargarete Klose (ms)
HeraldHorst Günter (bs)

The new HMV *Lohengrin* is a genuine and very pleasant surprise. There have been three other recordings of this perennial favorite, with the palm going to the earliest, that on Urania. Now, for the first time, Urania's supremacy is threatened, for this new recording is an excellent one from every angle.

The main surprise is the truly fine *Lohengrin* of Rudolph Schock—frankly the writer was not prepared for such a musicianly performance from Herr Schock. To be sure, he is a good tenor (and always has been), but the expressiveness and air of conviction he brings to the role are those of a genuine artist. He is at his best in the wonderful *Bridal Chamber Scene* and in the final aria *In fernem Land*—the writer has seldom heard either sung better.

Maud Cunitz is a stylish Elsa who uses her superior vocal equipment in a sure fashion. She is always on top her notes and never fails to realize that there is more to an operatic role than just singing the notes. Her voice is youthful (a certain asset) and full of color; her Elsa must be considered a decided success.

The roles of Ortrud (Margarete Klose) and Telramund (Metternich) are also first class. Mme.

Klose's Ortrud has been on view before, in the Urania set, and Josef Metternich, while less gifted vocally than the others, rises to the occasion and gives a very respectable performance. The others in the cast are more than capable, King Henry (Gottlob Frick) singing without the wobble usually associated with the part.

Wilhelm Schüchter's direction is sure and on a high musical level. The *vorspiel* is beautifully played and the famous *Prelude to Act III* is equally well done. For the rest, he keeps things moving along, never hurrying, never dragging, but always maintaining a firm grip on soloists, chorus and his orchestra.

The package is attractive (manual sequence only), no libretto but first class sound. The choice now lies between Urania and HMV—the writer prefers the newer version. W.

Cimarosa: Il Maestro di Cappella (complete). (Sung in Italian). Fernando Corena (bass) with Orchestra dei Pomeriggi Musicale di Milano conducted by Bruno Amaducci. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9118) \$2.95.

Cimarosa: Il Maestro di Cappella (complete). (Sung in Italian). Carmelo Maugeri (bass) with Orchestra da Camera di Milano conducted by Ennio Gerelli. One side, and **Cimarosa: Il Matrimonio Segreto** (overture and excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Elda Ribetti (soprano) and Amilcare Blaffard (tenor) with Orchestra da Camera di Milano conducted by Ennio Gerelli. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8450) \$5.95.

After getting along without it for some fifty odd years of recording, we are suddenly confronted with not one, but two, recorded performances of Cimarosa's delightful "intermezzo" *Il Maestro di Capella*.

The form of the "intermezzo" is one from which the present day comic opera evolved. It was designed originally to be played between the acts of a tragedy, to relieve the gloom, perhaps, and as Rousseau wrote, they "(interrupted) the main interest by an interest of a different sort, tossing and tugging the attention of the spectator . . . on a contrary direction."

Il Maestro di Capella is a very superior example of the form and is a thoroughly delightful piece. Both versions recorded here are good, although that by Fernando Corena is a definite first choice because of his greater vocal capacities. In addition, Corena is the more accomplished musician in that he realizes all the music's inherent wit and is content only to gently underscore it—Maugeri, at times, overbids and is, as a result, a little silly.

The Vox disc, however, has the added merit of some selections from Cimarosa's masterpiece *Il Matrimonio Segreto* on the odd side. They are beautifully sung by Elda Ribetti (one of this department's favorite sopranos) and Amilcare Blaffard, a tenor with better than average vocal endowment. The conductor for the Vox performances is Ennio Gerelli—a genuine musician.

Both discs include texts and translations, neither

of which shows much care in preparation, the English version of the London disc being quite inept. The Vox set, while a little better, omits portions of the *Matrimonio Segreto* libretto. London has used the smallest print this writer has yet encountered—it's about what you see on microfilm! Notes on the virtually unknown *Maestro di Capella* are practically non-existent.

Aside from this complaint, both discs are admirable, well recorded and each is worth its asking price.

W.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Sadko (complete). (Sung in Russian). Elizaveta Shumskaya (soprano); Vera Davidova (mezzo-soprano); Elizaveta Antonova (contralto); Georgi Nelepp, Tikhon Tchereniakov, Alexander Peregudov, Ivan Kozlovsky (tenors); Pavel Lizeetzian, Ilya Bogdanov (baritones); Sergei Krasovsky, Stepan Nikolau, Sergei Koltipin, Mark Reizen (basses); Chorus, Stage Band and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater conducted by Nicolai Golovanov. 3-12" discs in album (*CH-CHS-1307) \$17.85.

Sadko, Rimsky-Korsakov's "lyric legend in seven scenes" was written during 1895-96 and received its first performance in Moscow the year following its completion. The opera is a fantastic one, and the libretto was pieced together by Rimsky himself from various folk sources and legends. It is not surprising, then, to find the plot full of patch-work and, to be polite, sort of chaotic. The music that is supposed to hold this conglomeration together is drawn, to some extent, from an earlier tone poem (1867) of the same name with, of course, some new material. Portions of the score are very familiar, notably the Songs of the Viking Guest and Indian Guest. The great majority of the music is picturesque and is, as one would expect, brilliantly orchestrated.

The cast assembled from the forces of the Bolshoi Theatre is one of varying degrees of excellence. *Sadko* is sung by a better than average Russian tenor, Georgi Nelepp, who makes the most of his many opportunities. The distaff side of the opera leaves much to be desired. The girls are inclined to screech, and some are none too sure of the pitch. Surprisingly, two of the best singers are cast in relatively minor roles: Mark Reizen, a top-flight basso, is the Viking Guest; and Pavel Lizeetzian, a fine baritone, is the Venetian merchant. Ivan Kozlovsky, as the Indian Guest, sings the eve green *Song of India* in a nasal, whining tenor that is uncomfortably schmaltzy (Russian style).

To Nicolai Golovanov has fallen the unenviable task of trying to keep the diverse elements of the work together; and he succeeds very well. He has managed to tighten the score in many places, and the results are good. The recorded sound is pretty fair, insofar as Russian tapes are concerned, but it is still considerably below the standards we have come to expect in this country. An English translation of the Russian libretto is furnished.

W.

Monteverdi: L'Incoronazione di Poppea (complete). (Sung in Italian). Sylvia Gaehwiller, Heidi Juon, Annelies Gamper, Lydia Herbst (sopranos); Friedrich Brueckner-Rueggeberg, Rolf Sander, Fred Reburg (tenors); Maria Helbling, Margarete Witte-Waldbauer (altos); Mabella Ott-Penetto (contralto); Franz Kelch (bass); Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra and chorus conducted by Walter Goehr. 3-12" discs in album (*CH-CHS-1184) \$17.85.

L'Incoronazione di Poppea, fruit of the incredible Monteverdi's seventy-fifth year, reminds one of Giuseppe Verdi's *Otello*, the latter also the work of a man one would ordinarily consider as being done with composing. Yet *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* is considered Monteverdi's greatest work, as is Verdi's *Otello*, and to have a "complete" recorded version available for study and repeated hearings is very good indeed.

As is usual with an old work such as this, the question of preparing it for modern performance is a considerable one. The notes supplied with the set (in the main, very good) are somewhat vague as to who did what to which. The reader is informed that conductor Goehr "not only acted as conductor but supervised as well the complete project, starting from the reconstruction of the score to the finished recorded performance." This would seem to make him "it," as the saying goes. In a note by the "editor," after some details on the harmonization and orchestration, one notes the ominous phrase "... the main editorial task ... was in adapting the score to a more compact presentation for a modern audience." What the "adaptations" were the reader is not informed although, in all honesty, the writer (who can make no claims as to being a Monteverdi authority) found the results not in the least offensive, either stylistically or chronologically. He would just have liked to know a little more about what went on in the arranging room.

The singers are all excellent, doubly so considering the difficulty of their tasks. Sylvia Gaehwiller, in the title role, reveals a pleasing soprano that is handled with sure musicianship. Friedrich Brueckner-Rueggeberg, a moderately gifted tenor, compensates for a lack of vocal charm by his intelligent phrasing and expressive singing. Seneca, sung by the youthful basso Franz Kelch, becomes a superior characterization. Equally good are the others in the cast, Mabella Ott-Penetto (Ottone), Maria Helbling (Ottavia), Heidi Juon (Drusilla) and Annelies Gamper (Amor). Most of the singers, incidentally, are by way of being specialists in the field of ancient music.

Walter Goehr's direction is sure-handed and brisk—never dragging, and thus interest is sustained. The orchestra, apparently of proper size and make up, sounds well and, as might be expected, plays with style and expression.

The task of preparing the opera and recording was a great one, and it can be accounted a success. The recorded sound is good.

W.

Arias Sung and Acted. Licia Albanese (soprano); Jussi Bjoerling (tenor); Leonard Warren, Robert Merrill (baritones); Joseph Cotten, Deborah Kerr, Dennis King (acting); with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1801) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Aida*—Celeste Aida (sung by Bjoerling, acted by Cotton); *Boheme*—Mi chiamano Mimi (sung by Albanese, acted by Kerr); *Madama Butterfly*—Un bel di vedremo (sung by Albanese, acted by Kerr); *I Pagliacci*—Si puo (sung by Warren, acted by King); *I Pagliacci*—Vesti la giubba (sung by Bjoerling, acted by Cotton); *Rigoletto*—Cortigiani (sung by Warren, acted by King); *Traviata*—Ah! Dite alla Giovine (sung by Albanese and Merrill, acted by Kerr and King).

In releasing the above LP disc, RCA Victor had this to say in its press notice:

"We hope these acting versions by stars of the legitimate theatre will bring new enthusiasts to opera who had never before been interested because of the barrier created by the foreign language librettos of most operas."

This disc, then, is definitely not for lovers of opera. We do not know whether it will accomplish its avowed purpose of bringing into their fold persons who never did care much for opera before; we hope it will, and if this disc won't, we cannot think of anything else that would.

We mention that in no case should one think that this is a "hopped up" version either of the aria or of the theatre; both are done "straight"—the singing just as it would be done on any other operatic disc, and the acting just as it might be done on the stage. The acting precedes the singing in each case, so that the listener will know just what the singer is talking about. We wish the disc well.

Tchaikovsky: Pique Dame (complete). (Sung in Russian). E. Smolenskaya, N. Kositzina, V. Firssova (sopranos); E. Verbitskaya (mezzo-soprano); V. Borisenko (contralto); Georgi Nelepp, Alexander Peregudov, F. Godovkin, V. Shevtzov (tenors); Alexei Ivanov, Paval Liseetzian (baritones); Vsevolod Tyutyunik, Ivan Skobtzov (basses); Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater conducted by A. Melik-Pashehev. 3-12" discs in album (*CH-CHS-1305) \$17.85.

Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame* ("The Queen of Spades") has never been very popular outside his native Russia. The reasons, after hearing this recording, are hard to find. The libretto, prepared from a Pushkin novel by Modeste Tchaikovsky, is a masterly one, containing all the elements of a rattling good story—magic, love interest, gamblers, and even a play within a play. The opera was composed while Tchaikovsky was at the height of his powers (it falls between the *Fifth* and *Sixth Symphonies*), and it abounds in lush melodies and genuinely dramatic passages.

The cast is a good one, featuring Georgi Nelepp

as the hero, Herman. He manages to be quite convincing in the role and rises to considerable heights in the dramatic scene wherein he confronts the old Countess and demands to know the secret of the cards. Again, in the final scene he conveys the feeling and urgency written in the music in sterling fashion. As the unfortunate Lisa, Smolenskaya sings very well. Here is a difficult role, and it is carried off in a grand manner. The part of the devilish old Countess is sung by an excellent mezzo, Verbitskaya, in a very successful fashion. The others in the long cast (there are fourteen roles!) are uniformly good.

The chorus and orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre, under the able direction of Melik-Pashehev, perform creditably and go a long way towards making a success of one of the best operatic recordings to come from the USSR.

An earlier, abridged recording on Urania (TNR Jan. '52) suffers by comparison because of several factors: first, it is sung in German; second, the cast, with the possible exception of Margherita Klose, was weak; and third, it was drastically cut. The present *Pique Dame* has none of these failings and is pretty well recorded to boot. An English version of the libretto (surprisingly easy to follow) is included.

W.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov—Death of Boris. Raphael Arie (bass) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. One side, and **Verdi: Don Carlos**—Ella giammai m'amo. Raphael Arie (bass) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Isidore Karr. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9018) \$2.95.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov—I Have Attained the Highest Power. One side, and **Rubinstein: The Demon**—I Am He Whom You Called. Raphael Arie (bass) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9073) \$2.95.

Russian Operatic Arias. Raphael Arie (bass) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9074) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Eugen Onegin*—Everyone knows love on earth; *Prince Igor*—I hate a dreary life; *Sadko*—Song of the Viking Guest; *Life for the Czar*—They guess the truth.

This series of three moderately priced ten-inch discs offers the record collector a sampling of Raphael Arie's interpretive art, with special emphasis on the Russian operas.

The *Boris Godounov* excerpts are of most musical interest but also offer something of a problem. The *Death of Boris* is explicitly identified as using the original Moussorgsky orchestration; the other two are not so marked and, frankly, sound like Rimsky-Korsakov's work. Now there are two schools of thought on *Boris Godounov* and the two arrange-

ments and orchestrations: one damns Rimsky as a meddler, the other is thankful for the colorful and brilliant orchestration he supplied. The writer belongs to the latter group. Arie suffers from comparison with two other great interpreters of the role, Feodor Chaliapin and Boris Christoff. Arie has neither the voice nor the temperament to match either of the others; he is more in a class with Kipnis and Pinza. *The Death Scene* is only fair recording, the other two excerpts sound quite well.

The aria from *The Demon* and the Russian group on *L-D-9074 are all well sung, but again one feels a lack of interpretive insight and, occasionally, a vocal inadequacy that prevents their being really first class. *Ella giammai m'amo* from "Don Carlos" is well sung by most standards; in fact it might almost be considered the most successful of the entire group; Arie seems more at ease, surer of his ground.

Erede and Krips do excellently with the orchestral parts, and London has supplied jacket notes that add to the listener's enjoyment. W.

VOCAL



Songs by Bellini, Verdi, and Mascagni. Patricia Neway (soprano) accompanied by Thomas Mayer (piano). 1-12" disc (*ETERNA-101) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *L'abbandono*; *Per pietà*; *Malinconia*, *Ninfa gentile* (Bellini). *La Seduzione*; *Brindisi*; *Non l'accostare all'urna*; *Perduta ho la pace* (Verdi). *Rosa*; *Alla luna*; *Serenata*; *Ballata* (Mascagni).

Songs—art songs that is—are more indigenous to Germany and France than to Italy, the home of opera. Few indeed are the recordings of Italian songs (aside from the popular) but Eterna has corrected the lack of balance in the recorded repertoire by issuing a disc devoted to songs by Bellini, Verdi and Mascagni.

All these songs will, in most cases, be unfamiliar. The question to be decided is, do they warrant closer acquaintance? It is difficult to come to a conclusion, for after all, Verdi, Bellini and Mascagni knew how to write for the voice; and the first two, at least, could spin a melody with the best of them.

Let's look at Verdi's group first. There are four, and all of them are little arias; our favorite is *Perduta ho la pace*, a setting of Goethe's immortal *Gretchen am Spinnrade*. It is, to say the least, very different from Schubert's. The sombre *Non l'accostare all'urna* is also characteristic in its morbid subject and treatment. The other two are trifles. Bellini's songs, three in number, are more lyrical (as was his genius) and are, perhaps, better songs, if not quite as good music. Mascagni is represented by four songs, including the famous *Serenata*. Here one comes closer to the popular Italian song, and the musical values are considerably lower.

Miss Neway sings all eleven songs with real insight, both as to poetry and music. Her voice is agreeable

and always more than adequate for the material, and she handles the assignment in sterling fashion.

One comes to the inescapable conclusion, however, particularly in the cases of Bellini and Verdi, that as song writers they were top flight opera composers. Mascagni, one feels, is more at home in these smaller forms.

Eterna's recording is disappointing. There was overloading of the original tapes and consequent blasting. A separate sheet giving texts and translations is supplied in addition to notes on the jacket. W.

Ives: (11) Songs. One side, and **Revueltas: (10) Songs.** (Sung in English). Jacqueline Griessle (soprano) accompanied by Josef Wolman (piano). 1-12" disc (*SPA-9) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *When Stars Are in the Quiet Skies*, *Tolerance*, *A Night Thought*, *At the River*, *At Sea*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Walt Whitman*, *Mists*, *I'll Not Complain*, *In Summer Fields*, *At Parting* (Ives); (5) *Songs of Childhood*, (2) *Songs*, *It Is True*, *The Owl*, *Bull Frogs* (Revueltas).

Charles Edward Ives, considered by some to be "perhaps the most original and characteristically 'American' composer this country has produced," was largely self taught; in fact he was an active business man for twenty-five years. There is a growing interest in his music, as witnessed by the fact that in the 1936 Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia there were three short pieces listed (including the fabulous *General Booth Enters Heaven*) while the most recent Schwann catalogue indicates recordings of two symphonies, five sonatas and several other discs devoted to miscellaneous works.

The present recording features a group of eleven songs, each one an interesting and original conception. There is, for example, his setting of Heinrich Heine's *Ich grolle nicht* that, while lacking the obvious melody of Schumann's more famous setting, still loses nothing by comparison. Another lovely song is the *Christmas Carol* which strikes a note that is at once exotic and fitting. Hearing these songs, one realizes the truth of R. D. Darrell's statement that "(Ive's music) once thought to be the work of a complete eccentric, is now found to anticipate, by a good many years, many of the 'discoveries' of Stravinsky and Schönberg."

Silvestre Revueltas (1889-) is a newcomer to records. He is represented here by ten songs and, to be honest, this writer found them dull in comparison to the Ives. To be sure, they are sung in English translations, and however well such things are done, something is usually lacking. The words sounded stilted and the over-all effect is one of superficiality—how much was due to the words, how much to the music, is difficult to determine.

Jacqueline Griessle sings excellently material that is strange and, one suspects, difficult to sing. Her expression and general artistry are of a high order, and she has been well recorded. Her accompanist,

Josef Wolman, does a fine job. The texts of the songs are supplied. W.

German: Merrie England (excerpts). Patricia Baird (soprano), Marjorie Thomas (contralto), Alexander Young (tenor), and John Cameron (baritone) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Olof. One side, and **German: Nell Gwynn**—(3) Dances. And **German: Henry VIII**—(3) Dances. New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Olof. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-772) \$5.95.

The English composer, Edward German (1862-1936), is practically unknown in this country except for his *Nell Gwynn Dances* and *Henry VIII Dances* which will be found on the reverse side of the present LP disc. However, after Sullivan's death German teamed up with Captain Basil Hood, who had been Sir Arthur's librettist after the famous partnership of Gilbert and Sullivan came to an end with *The Grand Duke* in 1896, and shortly after the turn of the century they produced *Merrie England* with tremendous success. *Merrie England* is a light opera based on the love story of Sir Walter Raleigh and Bessie Throckmorton, with the Earl of Essex and Queen Elizabeth taking prominent parts. As one would assume, it is English to the core, and it is easy to understand its immense popularity in Great Britain. Perhaps there will be some interest in the present recording of excerpts from *Merrie England* on this side of the Atlantic, but we rather think that it will be quite small. As there is considerable similarity between it and the earlier G & S operettas, it might appeal to Gilbert and Sullivan fans in this country.

Songs of Debussy and Ravel. (Sung in French). Gerard Souzay (baritone) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Edouard Lindenberg. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9091) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Ballade que Fait Villon à la Requête de sa Mère pour Prier Notre Dame*, *La Grotte*, *Mandoline* (Debussy); *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée* (Ravel).

Moussorgsky: Songs and Dances of Death. (Sung in French). Heinz Rehfuss (baritone) accompanied by Hans Willi Haesußlin (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9070) \$2.95.

Three of Debussy's lesser known songs are recorded on one side of this first little London disc. The first, chronologically, is *Mandoline*, written when Debussy was eighteen years old. It is a charming, youthful work, nothing more. The most pretentious is the second of the three Villon *Ballades*—a small *scena* in effect—that has considerable merit. *La Grotte* is a song, written in 1904, that meant little to this writer. The orchestral accompaniment seems out of place in all but the Villon *Ballade*. Quite a different story are the Ravel *Don Quichotte* songs. Originally written for a movie version of Cervantes'

tale that was to feature Feodor Chaliapin, the fastidious Ravel could not get them done in time for the production so they were never incorporated in the film. There are three songs in the group: a romantic one, an epic one and a drinking song. These also have orchestral accompaniments but, in contrast to the Debussy offerings, they are appropriate. Gerard Souzay sings with all his wonted aplomb and finesse, and the disc is one for all interested in "modern" French music.

Moussorgsky's great song-cycle *Songs and Dances of Death* is here recorded for the third time. An earlier "dubbing" of the Parlophone originals issued by Decca and featuring Myers Foggin, is considered in many quarters to be the classic or definitive performance of this sombre music. Heinz Rehfuss has considerably more voice than Foggin ever had, and one would expect this newer recording to be more successful. But not so—unfortunately, Rehfuss sings in a French translation that has the effect of emasculating the songs. The Russian language added a musical note of its own—it lent a roughness and dramatic quality that is lacking in this well considered but essentially civilized performance.

The recording of both discs has been well accomplished; notes on the music are supplied, but neither text nor translation is in evidence. W.

Schwartz: By the Beautiful Sea. Shirley Booth and the Original Broadway Cast. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-531) \$5.95.

Adler: The Pajama Game. John Raitt, Janis Paige and Eddie Foy, Jr., with the Original Broadway Cast. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4840) \$5.95.

Moross: The Golden Apple. Priscilla Gillette, Stephen Douglass, Kaye Ballard and Jack Whiting, with the Original Broadway Cast. 1-12" disc (*V-LOC-1014) \$5.95.

Rollicking tunes and lilting lyrics are the features of these three Broadway shows featuring the original casts of each. Each will make a nice memento of the show for one who has seen it; we are listing them in the order in which they appealed to us.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Die Kunst der Fuge. Gustav Leonhardt (harpsichord). 2-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-532/3) \$11.90.

One might wonder why Bach's mighty *Die Kunst der Fuge* is available in three LP recordings, each with different instrumentation: Fritz Heitmann (organ) (*CL-L-8121/2, TNR Mar. '51); Scherchen and the Beromünster Orchestra (*L-LLA-2, TNR Aug. '50); and the present one for harpsichord solo. We think a satisfactory answer is contained in Bach Guild's notes, from which we quote: "... The theory behind (the different arrangements) was

that since the work was written in open score, with no indication of any instrumentation, it could be taken up by any instruments.

"Our century . . . has seen an increasingly developing knowledge of both Bach's musical style and of the entire Baroque era . . . combined with a re-discovery of the instruments used. . . . The present recording . . . represents the fruit of these explorations. Just as modern research has discovered that rich and bright colors lay in Rembrandt's paintings, underneath the grime, smoke and varnish that was long taken as Rembrandt's style, so this version, based on new study and research, makes this great work newly approachable to the listener."

This apologia makes quite a case for the harpsichord version, and we must say we found something here we did not ever hear before; however, how much is due to the harpsichord and how much to the greatness of Bach we are not prepared to state. Nor are we going to take a stand for or against any of the versions presently available; we are only going to say that *The Art of Fugue* is a monumental opus, one deserving of continued study and appraisal, and one which can stand repeated hearings. And we venture to surmise that the last word never will be said about it.

The reproduction and packaging of Bach Guild's latest release is very fine, indeed.

PIANO



Mendelssohn: Songs without Words (Vol. I) Ginette Doyen (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5192) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Songs without Words*, Op. 19, Nos. 1-6; Op. 30, Nos. 1-6; Op. 38, Nos. 1-3.

Mendelssohn: Songs without Words (Vol. II) Ginette Doyen (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5246) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Songs without Words*, Op. 38, Nos. 4-6; Op. 53, Nos. 1-6; Op. 62, Nos. 1-6.

Mendelssohn: Songs without Words (Vol. III) Ginette Doyen (piano) 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5279) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Songs without Words*, Op. 67, Nos. 1-6; Op. 85, Nos. 1-6; Op. 102, Nos. 1-7.

Westminster has performed a real service in making available the complete *Songs without Words* on three LP discs. They are charmingly performed by Mlle. Ginette Doyen. Mlle. Doyen was born in Montceau les Mines, France, and she gave her first concert at the age of seven. At ten she entered the Conservatoire National de Paris where she won many awards; she was awarded the celebrated "Prix Pages" at sixteen. She has concertized throughout most of Europe, including England, and in North and South Africa; we do not recall her having come to the States.

The *Lieder ohne Worte* were particularly loved in England, and it is to them, along with his oratorios and *lieder*, that Mendelssohn owes his firm hold on the mass of English people. The same could be said, we think, for Americans. The forty-nine *Songs without Words* are wonderfully inventive; it was not too much for us to take them all at one sitting, although we cannot ever recall having done that before. Mendelssohn has long been identified with his *Songs without Words* (virtually his own invention), and students should be glad to have the opportunity of studying such beautifully-wrought renditions as are supplied by Mlle. Doyen. The piano reproduction is above reproach.

We would call our readers' attentions to one error on the jacket of Volume 1: the jacket states that Op. 38, Nos. 4-6, and Op. 53, Nos. 1-4, are contained on the disc, but this is not so. These numbers are contained in Volume 2, as is stated on the jacket of the latter disc; just glancing at the jackets, one would receive the impression that these seven numbers were duplicated.

Each volume is obtainable separately, and the *Songs without Words* in each one are listed accurately in the heading.



DICTION

Tashlin: The Bear that Wasn't. Keenan Wynn (narrator) with music by Walter Schumann. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-528) \$3.

We note that our editor is not going to get caught in the argument as to whether Frank Tashlin's book "The Bear That Wasn't," from which this series of records was taken, is a story for children or whether it is for adults. He listed this album under **DICTION**, and that is an out for him. *The Saturday Review of Literature* thought that it was a satire for adults. *The New York Times* listed it among its juvenile books. We're neutral.

Those who have read the book or had the book read to them will doubtless be interested in its coming to life as it does on these discs. The musical setting provided by Walter Schumann adds greatly to the enjoyment of the story. In this album M-G-M has an item that may sweep the country or it may lay an egg—no one can tell until the public has a chance to hear it.

MISCELLANEOUS



The History of Music in Sound (Vol. 2: Early Medieval Music up to 1300). Edited by Dom Anselm Hughes. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6015) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: (by types of music): Byzantine

Music; Byzantine and Ambrosian Hymns; Pre-Gregorian Music; Gregorian Music; Liturgical Drama; Medieval Songs (Latin, French) Provencal, English, German, Spanish, Italian); Early Polyphony (10th & 11th Cents.); Spanish Polyphony (12th Cent.); English & Norman Polyphony (13th Cent.); Dance Tunes (13th Cent.); English Polyphony (14th Cent.).

This volume of two long playing records is the first of ten such sets to be issued by RCA Victor, a series that will cover the history of music from *Ancient and Oriental Music* (Volume I, not yet released due to technical difficulties) to the music of the twentieth century. It is an extraordinarily ambitious undertaking and, if the present volume is any criterion, one that has had some of the foremost musical talent of our time (both administrative and executive) lavished upon it.

Gerald Abraham, professor of music at Liverpool University, is the general editor of the anthology, titled the "History of Music in Sound." The two discs in the album, *Early Medieval Music* up to 1300 contains some fifty-seven examples of musical art, beginning with a sampling of Byzantine music (6th century) and closing with a wonderful *Alleluia psallat* dating from about 1300. In between are hosts of examples of the music of the intervening periods, both vocal and instrumental, sacred and secular.

Most of the music has been edited by Dom Anselm Hughes, a thoroughly qualified scholar and musician. The performing artists in this set include the Brompton Oratory Choir, the Nashdom Abbey Choir and Safford Cape's Pro Musica Antiqua Ensemble. Among the instrumentalists are some members of the famous Dolmetsch family.

The expert singing and careful preparation that have gone into the performances on these records cannot be praised too highly. They are invaluable for the serious student, a must for schools and colleges. For the general music lover also they can be highly instructive, although Dom Anselm Hughes' honest words in the introduction to the set are worth quoting: "To some listeners the music on these records, because of the unfamiliarity of its idiom in tonality, melody, harmony or rhythm, will make its full appeal only after two or more hearings. For this reason the gramophone record can claim to be the best method of introducing the beauties of medieval music to the public. . . ."

A seventy page book containing the whole or a substantial part of the score of each recorded piece, complete literary texts with translations, annotations, and historical details, is an added feature. Recorded sound is very good. W.

BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classie Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
♫ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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THERE HAS recently been announced, in response to widespread and consistent demand of music educators throughout the country, two comprehensive libraries of recorded music: "Musical Sound Books for Young Listeners" and "Music to Remember." Produced with the cooperation of the Kulas Foundation (Cleveland) and edited and arranged by Lillian Baldwin, the non-breakable, high fidelity 78 rpm recordings should go a long way towards filling the need of schools for suitable music for youngsters.

Miss Baldwin is the director of music appreciation of the Cleveland public schools, consultant in music education to the Cleveland Orchestra, and the author of several books widely used in music classes. She evidently knows her business; the eighty records in the "Music to Remember" series and the fifty-one in the "Musical Sound Books" series make rather imposing lists to which one would be hard-pressed to take exception. Of course, the libraries contain all the music discussed in two of Miss Baldwin's books: *Music for Young Listeners* and *Music to Remember*; yet the discs may be used independently of the books.

Most of the piano work on these records is done by Sondra Bianca, and the orchestra used on nearly all of them is the Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg, conducted by Hans-Jurgen Walther. These are all new recordings, transcribed from wide-range professional tapes, and they truly sound as good or better than the best of today's output, except that there is slightly more surface noise, probably due to the 78 rpm speed.

Needless to mention, 78's are the ideal discs for schools. In the first place the school need not buy new equipment to use them. Furthermore, LP's present too long a program for hard-to-keep-quiet youngsters, and selecting

one movement or short piece from an LP disc is a time-waster for the teacher. Musical Sound Book 78's are "Extended Play," however, and do play about 25 to 50 per cent longer than conventional 78's.

Not only schools, but parents of young children might do well to investigate these worthwhile records; small doses of good music might do wonders for that teen-ager, and there are plenty of selections for pre-teens and "just past toddlers." A catalog of both libraries may be obtained gratis from the publisher of this bulletin. All are 10-inch Vinylite 78 rpm discs, and each comes in its individual cardboard sleeve (like LP's); price, \$1.24 each.

* * *

A "Limited Edition" has recently been announced which should be of interest to collectors of records destined to be rareties. It is the London issue of the seven symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams, contained on 8-12" LP discs in a sturdy, dust proof box; price \$55. The *First Symphony* ("A Sea Symphony") takes three sides, and as an appropriate filler London has given us the *Overture and Incidental Music to Aristophanes' "The Wasps."* In addition to the *First* are included the *Symphony No. 2* ("A London Symphony"); *Symphony No. 3* ("Pastoral"); *Symphony No. 4 in F minor*; *Symphony No. 5 in D*; *Symphony No. 6 in E minor*; and *Symphony No. 7* ("Sinfonia Antartica"). The performers are The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, with Isobel Baillie (soprano), John Cameron (baritone), Margaret Ritchie (soprano), and the London Philharmonic Choir; Sir John Gielgud reads the superscriptions to the *Seventh*.

Three of Vaughan Williams' symphonies are already available: *Symphony No. 2* (*L-LL-569) and *Symphony No. 3* (*L-LL-721,

TNR Aug. '53) are the same recordings contained in the Limited Edition; and *Symphony No. 6* (*C-ML-4214, TNR Aug. '49) is available by Stokowski and the N. Y. Philharmonic. However, many collectors like the "specialness" of a Limited Edition—the silent surfaces, the assurance of not getting the umpteenth-thousandth pressing from the same "mother," the impending scarceness of the issue all lend glamor and satisfaction to the purchase.

If your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be filled promptly so long as the supply lasts. The price (\$55) includes postage to any point in U. S. A.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-one years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning August 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (highlights). Dolores Wilson (soprano), soloists, chorus and orchestra of Milan Opera—Capuana. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7120) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '53).

Wagner: *Lohengrin* (highlights). Soloists, chorus and orchestra of Munich State Opera—Böhme. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7123) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '52).

Tchaikovsky: *Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23*. Oscar Levant (piano) with Philadelphia Orchestra—Ormandy. One side, and Grieg: *Concerto in A minor, Op. 16*. Oscar Levant (piano) with N. Y. Philharmonic—Kurtz. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4883) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '48 & May '48).

Grieg: *Concerto in A minor, Op. 16*. One side, and Franck: *Symphonic Variations*. Walter Gieseking (piano) with Philharmonia Orchestra—von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4885) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '51 & Aug. '52).

Stravinsky: *L'Oiseau de Feu*. One side, and Stravinsky: *Le Sacre du Printemps*. N. Y. Philharmonic—Stravinsky. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4882) \$5.95. (TNR Feb. '47 & Mar. '44).

Gershwin: *Rhapsody in Blue*. Oscar Levant (piano) with Philadelphia Orchestra—Ormandy. And Gershwin: *An American in Paris*. N. Y. Philharmonic—Rodzinski. One side, and Gershwin: *Concerto in F*. Oscar Levant (piano) with N. Y. Philharmonic—Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4879) \$5.95. (TNR Aug. '45 & Aug. '42).

Schubert: *Symphony No. 8 in B minor* ("Unfinished"). Philadelphia Orchestra—Walter. One side, and Mozart: *Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551* ("Jupiter"). N. Y. Philharmonic—Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4880) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '47 & May '45).

Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 1 in F, Op. 10*. One side, and Sibelius: *Symphony No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 82*. Cleveland Orchestra—Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4881) \$5.95. (TNR Oct. '41 & Sept. '42).

Prokofiev: *Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67*. Arthur Godfrey (narrator) with Kostelanetz and his orchestra. One side, and Saint-Saëns: *Carnival of the Animals*. Noel Coward with Kostelanetz and his orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4907) \$5.95. (TNR Feb. '53 & Jan. '51).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: *Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60*. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-915) \$5.95.

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93*. One side, and Mendelssohn: *Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 107* ("Reformation"). Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9726) \$5.85.

Schubert: *Symphony No. 4 in C minor* ("Tragic"). One side, and Schubert: *Symphony No. 5 in B-flat*. Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9725) \$5.85.

The most underrated and underplayed of the Beethoven symphonies, No. 4, is here given a treatment that will do much to put it on an equal footing with the master's other more popular symphonies in the hearts of those who hear this wonderful performance of it. No other reading has ever seemed to us more convincing. Here is the very essence of the Viennese style of Beethoven interpretation, applied with skill and the finest finish, played with perfection by a great orchestra and recorded with a range and fidelity that combine to make this a truly great disc. The reproduction features a rich bass quality with no sacrifice of the upper range. This is the finest thing we have yet heard Krips do as far as the standard repertoire is concerned. No one will go wrong with this disc.

Alfred Wallenstein is celebrating his twenty-fifth year as an American conductor. For seven years,

from 1936, as music director of station WOR, Mutual's Newark radio station, he did much to bring good music to the radio public, and many of us remember his remarkable efforts during that time, one of the brighter spots of our radio activity. Since then he has been conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and its fine playing can now be heard on the pair of records which Decca has released. All of the four works which Wallenstein has recorded are interpreted along traditional lines, in good, solid, unaffected manner. His reading of the Schubert "Tragic" Symphony is particularly fine; the Beethoven No. 8 is of the brisk and precise variety. All these readings are the work of a sincere musician whose performances are beyond cavil. They do not attempt to throw any new light on the subject, they are true values from the hand of a real musician.

Decca has issued many good high fidelity recordings, but these are the first in a series bearing their Hi-Fi colophon. They are good, but set no new standards, and they do leave room for improvement. The bass is good, the balance is good; but the range is limited, and the texture is not in a class with the best that London, Mercury and many others are now offering. More sparkle and definition are needed. S.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5268) \$5.95.

More nonsense has been written about Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* and its "program" than almost any other piece of music in the repertoire. What is not generally known is that Berlioz left explicit instructions that the program notes were not to be given out unless the work was to be followed by its sequel, *Lélio*. Unfortunately the "literary" portion of the symphony was as great a success as the piece itself although, in the writer's opinion, far too much significance attaches to the somewhat morbid and sensational program.

Popular the symphony certainly is, however, for this Westminster disc is its seventh recorded performance. Unfortunately, there is still no completely satisfactory reading, with the possible exception of Monteux's early LP for Victor. All the others, including the present one, miss the point of the work—they stress its fantastic and sensational aspects and by so doing underplay its very considerable musical qualities. (Those who are familiar with Bruno Walter's old 78 rpm recording will understand what the writer means.) The temptation to "soup it up" is a strong one, no doubt, but a little artistic conscience, a little study of the work's background, would correct many of the current misapprehensions about the score.

Dr. Scherchen, on whom the writer recently delivered himself of a veritable pean of praise (TNR May '54), promptly crosses him up and comes close to committing artistic mayhem. Where in the world he came by his weird ideas of dynamics and tempi is difficult to understand. It is no longer *fantastique*;

it is *grotesque*. The score and orchestra are driven unmercifully in places, and the violins seem to shriek, the brass and woodwinds groan and the percussion bangs away in a manner that indicates an almost complete departure from sanity. The performance is one to be avoided at all costs unless one wishes to prove how far a reputable and gifted conductor can stray from the musical straight and narrow.

The recorded sound of this mish-mash is pretty good, considering how much the orchestra (not to mention Berlioz) was being pushed around. Practically all the writer could think of after hearing it was how wonderful it would be if RCA Victor, Charles Münch and the Boston Symphony Orchestra would get together and record this epochal score. W.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25 ("Classical"). And **Prokofiev: Love for Three Oranges Suite, Op. 33a.** L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Martinon. One side, and **Prokofiev: Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26.** Alexander Uninsky (piano) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3042) \$5.95.

There are now nine versions of Prokofiev's "Classical Symphony" in the LP catalogs, the most recently issued being Ansermet (*L-LL-864) and Markevitch (*ANG-35008) (both TNR Jan. '54). Epic's entry into the field is a strong one but does not, in our opinion, equal Ansermet. As for *Love for Three Oranges*, M. Martinon does not change our opinions regarding Désormière's superb rendition (and choice coupling with *Lt. Kije*) (*CL-P-8149) (TNR Oct. '51).

Just a short time ago (TNR June '54) we reviewed two fine performances of Prokofiev's *Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26*: one by Leonard Pennario with the St. Louis Symphony under Golschmann, and the other by Julius Katchen with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande under Ansermet. One may not deny the excellence of Uninsky and van Otterloo; many may prefer it, and we will be excoriated no matter which we choose; we will only say that we prefer the coupling of the Bartók *Third* and the Prokofiev *Third*, and still take Pennario by a whisker. However we must state that if you have none of these works in your library and wish to add them, you will do well to give serious consideration to the present disc, for the performances are all good. Reproduction is extremely brilliant, perhaps necessitating cutting down the treble response somewhat on some phonographs.

Debussy: La Mer. One side, and **Ravel: Rapsodie Espagnole.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35081-TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35081) \$5.95.

Karajan's performance of *La Mer* fairly shimmers and all but rocks the listener in his seat, so realistic are the "sea sounds" which emanate from this disc.

If you have a friend to whom you have been trying to illustrate Debussy's genius to no avail, play this disc for him; if he's still not convinced, the cause is lost. Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole* is a happy coupling, but Karajan has some tough competition in Ansermet (*L-LL-530) and Münch (*V-LM-1700) (TNR Sept. '52). Our choice would be the present LP, but we are admittedly making our selection because of the superb *La Mer*.

R. Strauss: Aus Italien, Op. 16. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-969) \$5.95.

R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28. One side, and **R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier**—Waltzes. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-46) \$2.85.

In our August 1953 issue we reviewed Rother's version of *Aus Italien* (*UR-URLP-7087), and readers are referred to that issue for a description of the work. There being but two versions available, the prospective purchaser should compare both; but we rather feel that most persons will prefer the present version under Clemens Krauss. We confess to being prejudiced, being an ardent admirer of the late conductor; however, Krauss brought meaning to the unfamiliar score we did not sense from Rother's performance.

Columbia offers this month two of Richard Strauss' most popular works performed by the incomparable Philadelphians under Ormandy. Reproduction is of the very best, and we predict a wide sale for this little item.

Evening in Paris. Franck Chacksfield and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-997) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Mademoiselle de Paris; Tell Me That You Love Me Tonight; My Prayer; Vous Qui Passez sans Me Voir; Pigalle; La Vie en Rose; Boom!; Ça c'est Paris; J'attendrai; Valentine; Clopin-Clopant; La Seine; Parlez-moi d'Amour; Can-Can.*

Music of Romberg. Mantovani and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1031) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *I Bring a Love Song; Wanting You; Stouthearted Men; Desert Song; One Alone; Just We Two; When I Grow Too Old To Dream; Lover Come Back to Me; Deep in My Heart; You Will Remember Vienna; Serenade (Student Prince); Drinking Song (Student Prince); Softly As in a Morning Sunrise; Will You Remember?*

Romantic Melodies. Mantovani and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-979) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Swedish Rhapsody; Music Box Tango; Ramona; Moonlight Serenade; Beautiful Dreamer; Luxembourg Polka; Shadow Waltz; The Moulin Rouge Theme; We'll Gather Lilacs; Royal Blue Waltz; Jamaican Rumba; Vola Colomba; Gipsy Legend; Suddenly.*

Three LP discs full of just-right music for summer listening; *ffrr* reproduction at its realistic best.

R. Strauss: Metamorphoses. Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Jascha Horenstein. One side, and **Stravinsky: Symphonie des Psaumes.** Orchestre National et Choeurs de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35101TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35101) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 15 in B-flat, K. 450. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 18 in B-flat, K. 456.** Ingrid Haebler (piano) with the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Hans Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8300) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto in C for Flute, Harp and Orchestra, K. 299. Willy Glass (flute) and Rose Stein (harp) with the South German Chamber Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in G for Flute and Orchestra, K. 313.** Willy Glass (flute) with the South German Chamber Orchestra conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66019) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto in A for Clarinet and Orchestra, K. 622. Jacques Lancelot (clarinet) with l'Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Louis de Froment. One side, and **Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 297B, Anh. 9.** Pierre Pierlot (oboe), Jacques Lancelot (clarinet), Gilbert Courcier (horn), Paul Hongne (bassoon) with l'Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Louis de Froment. 1-12" disc (*OL-50006) \$5.95.

Mozart's *Concerto No. 15* is, at the moment of writing, available on LP in only this version, a disc which replaces a previous Vox LP of the work played by Földes. If you yearn for the No. 15 you must perforce take this disc, but if you wish merely a good Mozart concerto recording, or if you specifically need No. 18, there are other and more desirable discs. No. 18, for example, has recently been issued by Lili Kraus and Pierre Monteux and the Boston Orchestra (*V-LM-1783) and no honest critic with normal hearing would fail to prescribe that superb disc which contains an equally fine reading of the No. 12. Miss Ingrid Haebler, judging by her photograph on the jacket cover, is a pretty and charming young lass of 25 (the notes say she was born in 1929), and as susceptible as we are to such matters, there remains the matter of reporting her piano playing. It is good, to be sure, but it has not the smooth authority which it may have when she gets to be the age of Lili Kraus or Mme. Novaës (to stay on the subject of female pianists). Hollreiser and the Viennese musicians play well, and Vox records well, with plenty of edge to the tone, in case you are still interested in No. 15.

Telefunken's Mozart disc of the *Flute Concerto* and the *Concerto for Flute and Harp* are by no means first or only recordings, but a strong case could be made for their being the best recordings so far. More erudite Mozarteans than we profess to be can decide that issue; we will say that we thought the performances beautifully contrived by all concerned including the recordings engineers. Willy Glass plays a beautiful flute, clear and true, not too breathy and not too much vibrato; Rose Stein is a fine harpist, and both artists' instruments are recorded with admirable balance.

L'Oiseau-Lyre's disc of Mozart, like Telefunken's, presents works previously issued on LP; however we are not convinced that the previous issues are not better. The present disc has reproduction a little too strident for our Mozartean ears, and the L'Oiseau-Lyre Orchestral Ensemble (we like the English language) is no paragon of precision. The solo artists are excellent, particularly clarinetist Jacques Lancelot, whose playing is as elegant as his name. But you will find other discs in the LP lists which contain these works in performances of better orchestral style and silkier reproduction. S.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1061) \$5.95.

Saint-Saëns; Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 53. One side, and **Lalo: Concerto in D minor.** Zara Nelsova (violoncello) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-964) \$5.95.

The Beethoven *Violin Concerto* has enjoyed a number of notable recordings, and this one by Menuhin is certainly one of the finest ever put on records. We should say by Menuhin and Furtwängler, for the noted conductor has a generous share in the cumulative effect of the performance. Menuhin is in good form technically and the Philharmonia Orchestra plays beautifully; but the greatness of this reading is the breadth and intensity of the playing. There is a loftiness and a nobility about the whole thing which is most persuasive. Among the other good recordings of this work are the Francescatti and Heifetz performances, and there are several not so good such as the Oistrakh, recently noted in these columns. For good reproduction and fine reading, the choice is pretty much between Francescatti and Menuhin.

The Saint-Saëns *Cello Concerto* is available in at least two other good versions; the Lalo 'cello concerto has not fared so well, and this is the best to appear. This disc also has the distinction of coupling two major 'cello concertos which makes it a good value. Zara Nelsova is a fine 'cellist, and she explores the eloquent Saint-Saëns *Concerto No. 1* with much style and silken tone. This work is so typically Saint-Saëns, with a rather pastel over-all effect, yet each part is so nicely proportioned and constructed with such skill

and dexterity. The range of the 'cello and its contrasting colors are exploited beautifully. Lalo's romantic concerto is more diverse in its three movements, and rather conscious at times of demonstrating the technical possibilities of the instrument. Miss Nelsova gives it a sterling reading, and in both works Sir Adrian Boult and the London Philharmonic lend capital support. London's reproduction is fine throughout. S.

Berg: Violin Concerto. André Gertler (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. One side, and **Bartók: Sonata for Violin Solo.** André Gertler (violin). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35091TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35091) \$5.95.

Khachaturian: Violin Concerto. Igor Oistrakh (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35100-TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35100) \$5.95.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 5 in G, Op. 35. Alfred Brendel (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. One side, and **Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D-flat, Op. 10.** Sviatoslav Richter (piano) with the Moscow Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. And **Prokofiev: Sonata No. 5 in C minor, Op. 38.** Hans Graf (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-599) \$5.95.

The Berg *Violin Concerto* now appears in its third LP recording. This reviewer does not recall having heard the Strickland performance; but the present reading by the distinguished "Belgian violinist" of Hungarian origin is a more polished job than the Krasner—the original recording on 78, lately transferred to LP. The present disc is, needless to say, superior as to reproduction. The coupling brings the fourth LP of the Bartók *Sonata for Solo Violin*. If one is a rabid Bartók fan or a fancier of solo violin sonatas, this work will be of interest; for it is a masterpiece of violin writing in the most mature style of Bartók—it was the last work he completed in full before his death. But it is not an easily accessible work, so listen before you buy unless you know the music.

The recording of the Khachaturian *Violin Concerto* is the best in the LP lists, by virtue not only of its excellent reproduction, but also because of its fine performance. Igor Oistrakh is the twenty-three year old son of the famous Soviet fiddler, David Oistrakh; and from what can be heard of him in this work, he will soon be crowding papa quite a bit. It is rather difficult to judge an artist, or render a valid opinion, on hearing him in only a work such as the Khachaturian; but he has a virtuoso violinist's characteristics beyond any doubt. If you desire the catchy and melodious concerto by the Armenian-born composer, this is the one to get.

Prokofiev's *Third Concerto* has been heard and

recorded generously; but recordings of his other piano concerti have been non-existent, save for one of the *First*. We now have a disc with the *First* and *Fifth* (plus a sonata). The short *Concerto No. 1* is a one-movement work in sonata form, which created a critical stir in its day but holds no terror for today's tastes. The *Concerto No. 5* was written in 1932, the time of the great financial crisis in most of the world, and it is Prokofiev in his most nihilistic vein. It is in five movements, none of them in traditional, or sonata-form mold. Whatever poetic moments the work may have are completely dominated by the hard brilliance which Prokofiev could well produce. Both concerti and the sonata are ably performed and well recorded, the best of them being the *Fifth Concerto*, an interesting work in a good first recording. S.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. Julian Olevsky (violin) with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Mitchell. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5273) \$5.95.

Julian Olevsky may be an unfamiliar name to many persons, but it won't be for long. At twenty-seven he augurs well for the crown of Heifetz as the best fiddler of the day in a decade or two. Born in Germany in 1927, Olevsky is a member of a distinguished musical family. His father was an outstanding violinist, and his cousin, Paul Olevsky, was first cellist of the Philadelphia Orchestra (on leave in the armed services). When his family emigrated to Argentina, Julian came under the tutelage of the celebrated teacher, Alexander Petschnikoff, and at ten played a debut recital in Buenos Aires. He has made two extensive tours of the United States and is on his way to an internationally brilliant musical future.

His reading of the Brahms *Violin Concerto*, one of the very greatest violin concertos in the repertoire, is a masterpiece from start to finish. There is not only a superb technical accuracy, but a sureness and ease that makes technical matters unnoticeable. His interpretation offers nothing beyond the traditions of the work, but his reading is unassailable for that reason. It is built along solid, straightforward ideas and performed so perfectly that personal embellishment are wholly unnecessary. There is plenty of awareness of the content of the score; it is no dry reading. One is amazed that this young man can produce a Brahms *Concerto* that is fully the equal of any other on LP and far better than the majority of them. It is truly a performance of sterling merit, measured by any manner and compared with any of the others. It would be our first choice and recommendation of any available on LP.

Howard Mitchell and the National Symphony have provided an excellent and well adjusted accompaniment (once the rather self-conscious opening passages are over). Westminster's reproduction is a model of clarity, revealing violin tone; it has good balance, and what little bit of resonance and perspective it lacks is

soon forgotten in the over-all excellence of reproduction, to say nothing of the performance. S.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 3 in C, Op. 26. Alexander Uninsky (piano) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. One side, and **Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25** ("Classical"). And **Prokofiev: Love for Three Oranges Suite, Op. 33a.** L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3042) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 12, No. 2. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in A, Op. 47** ("Kreutzer"). Jean Fournier (violin) and Ginette Doyen (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5275) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Trio in C, Op. 87. One side, and **Beethoven: Variations in C on "La ci darem la mano" by Mozart.** Hans Kamesch (oboe), Manfred Kautsky (oboe) and H. Hadamousky (English horn). And **Beethoven: Rondino in E-flat.** Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5262) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"). One side, and **Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108.** Christian Ferras (violin) and Pierre Barbizet (piano). 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66014) \$5.95.

All of the works on *WEST-WL-5275 and *T-LGX-66014 appear on many other LP discs; we can recommend the Westminster, but the Telefunken has reproduction on the dull side.

Only the *Rondino* on *WEST-WL-5262 has appeared on LP previous to the present issue. It is to the credit of Messrs. Kamesch, Kautsky and Hadamousky that they infuse an impression of familiarity in the little-known trio; nothing could seem more natural than to hear two oboes and an English horn together, though of course not many works are scored for these instruments. The Mozart aria will, no doubt, be familiar to you; yet in this version it might be said that Beethoven knew best—it seems to have been written for this woodwind trio. This little disc is the surprise of the month in the chamber music field, the *Rondino* making an appropriate filler.

Turina: La Oracion del Torero. And **Wolf: Italian Serenade.** One side, and **Creston: Quartet, Op. 6.** Hollywood String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8260) \$5.95.

Two "first LP" recordings appear on this Capitol disc. Joaquin Turina (1882-1949) was born in Seville, began his musical studies there, continued them at Madrid, and completed them at the Schola Cantorum in Paris under d'Indy; he, along with Falla, Granados, Albeniz and some others, became one of the leaders of the "nationalist" musical movement in Spain. *La Oracion del Torero* ("The Prayer of the

Bullfighter") is an example of the kind of small works he produced abundantly. It is a romantic work, narrative rather than dramatic, not of great importance, but rather pleasant . . . Paul Creston (1906-) was born in New York and is self-taught in harmony, theory and composition. His *String Quartet*, Op. 8 dates from 1936 and was first performed in September of that year at Yaddo in Saratoga Springs. It is in four movements: Allegro, Scherzoso, Andante Ecclesiastico, and Fugo, and evidently reflects four aspects of the composer's personality. That Creston was interested in rhythm could easily be deduced from this work; the beat is pronounced and accentuated in all but the third movement, which is in the style of Gregorian Chant (possibly reflecting his work as organist-choirmaster of St. Malachy's Church, New York). Not dissonant, the Quartet may be recommended as indicative of one school of American composition . . . Hugo Wolf's (1860-1903) *Italian Serenade* is an appropriate filler for the Turina side; it is competently performed.

Capitol's FDS reproduction fits these performances like a glove, so to speak; one feels almost a part of the very fine Hollywood String Quartet, which is evidently in sympathy with the works. If you are interested in modern chamber music not too hard to take, the present disc is warmly recommended on all counts.

J.

Mozart: (7) Trios. Eugenio Brunoni (clarinet) and the Trio di Bolzano: Nunzio Montanari (piano); Giannino Carpi (violin); and Sante Amadori (violoncello). 3-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-8493) \$17.85.

CONTENTS: *Trio in B-flat for Violin, 'Cello and Piano*, K. 254; *Trio in G for Violin, 'Cello and Piano*, K. 496; *Trio in E-flat for Clarinet, Viola and Piano*, K. 498; *Trio in B-flat for Violin, 'Cello and Piano*, K. 502; *Trio in E for Violin, 'Cello and Piano*, K. 542; *Trio in C for Violin, 'Cello and Piano*, K. 548; *Trio in G for Violin, 'Cello and Piano*, K. 564.

This album affords the student the excellent opportunity to study the lovely Mozart Piano Trios performed by the sympathetic Trio di Bolzano, with Eugenio Brunoni (clarinet). Vox is to be commended for a scholarly (and entertaining) job.

The piano trios were mainly written for performance at private music meetings. In all of them the piano (at which in all probability Mozart himself presided) has the lion's share of the work. The gem of the lot, undoubtedly, is the Clarinet Trio (K. 498); the distinctive timbres of the clarinet and viola give the work a romantic coloring, at times sombre, especially in the minuet, which is apparently the most serious movement.

One feels that even the occasional hearer would instantly fall in love with any of these trios; yet the erudite scholar will find much meat here. This reviewer revels in such music and hopes this wonderful set will meet with the public acceptance it deserves.

CHORAL



Handel: Messiah (complete). (Sung in English). Jennifer Vyvyan (soprano); Norma Procter (contralto); George Maran (tenor); Owen Brannigan (bass); London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, with George Malcolm (harpsichord) and Ralph Downes (organ). 4-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-19) \$23.80.

This, the second new recording of Handel's *Messiah*, came as a disappointment to the writer who is still reveling in the newly revealed beauties of the performance by Dr. Scherchen and his associates issued a few months earlier (TNR Apr. '54). London and Sir Adrian Boult have done nothing more than to present a well-recorded, placidly sung version of the well known oratorio. To be sure, the orchestra and chorus have been toned down (the Mozart orchestration is, presumably, not used) but there is none of the intensity of feeling, the genuine drama that marked the Westminster recording.

As to the edition used, London merely states "from the original manuscript" (where else?)—an unenlightening and ambiguous statement if there ever was one. The only other light thrown on the subject is a casual sentence in the notes to the effect that "the orchestration for *Messiah* consists of strings, strengthened by flutes, oboes, bassoons with trumpets and drums for the great choruses . . . this is the typical basic orchestra of the baroque period to which Handel often adds in his other oratorios and operas, but not here." More ambiguity. Which version is this and, it is only fair to ask, whose?

What greets the ear is a straightforward, conventional, traditional performance, not quite as fully blown as some have been in the past, but certainly nothing particularly new. The soloists are good, but definitely not as fine as those in the Westminster set, only Jennifer Vyvyan being comparable with her counterpart, Margaret Ritchie.

The chief differences lie in the direction. The choruses, such as *Unto us a Child is born* and the incomparable *Hallelujah* are not delivered in the exciting fashion one hoped for; rather they are pedestrian and could almost be described as routine.

The writer realizes that many persons prefer *Messiah* sung in the traditional manner—many have taken exception to what are regarded in some quarters as Dr. Scherchen's "eccentric" tempi. One can only state that after living with the Westminster *Messiah* for several months the conviction is strengthened that it is the most interesting and dramatic version of the incomparable music ever recorded. The choice lies, then, between a "new look" as it were, and a "familiar look"—it is a matter of personal preference—a field where the present writer does not care to force himself. But it must be obvious what his feelings are.

W.

Fauré: Requiem, Op. 48. Pierrette Alarie (soprano) and C. Maurane (baritone) with the Chœur e. Brasseur and l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3044) \$5.95.

This is the fifth recording of Fauré's *Requiem* and the fourth this writer has heard. The best previous one was on Capitol (TNR Jan. '54) and it still is a first class performance. The present version on Epic Records is also a fine one, but in a different way. Fournet's approach is a more dramatic one, although the work is far from theatrical in nature—rather the opposite. Thus, while one says "dramatic," do not for one minute think the end result is in any way similar to Berlioz' great work (which Fauré detested) or Verdi's.

The chorus, orchestra and soloists are excellent in the best sense of that overworked word. Owners of the Capitol set need not worry, but those who do not have the work are advised to hear both versions before making a choice. The earlier sets on Oceanic and Columbia are not in a class technically with the two aforementioned recordings although their many artistic merits will have many defenders.

This is one of the very best Epic recordings the writer has heard to date; both the vocal and instrumental ensembles being recorded with uncommon clarity and genuine balance. Come to think of it, a goodly part of the "drama" might lie in the recording techniques used. There is an intelligent appraisal and analysis of the *Requiem* in Harold Lawrence's jacket notes. W.

Charpentier: Assumpta est Maria. (Sung in Latin). Soloists, Choir of Jeunesses Musicales de France and Orchestra conducted by Louis Martini, with Henriette Roget (organ). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8440) \$5.95.

This is the second release of a major work by the great seventeenth century French composer, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, prepared under the auspices of the Charpentier Society. An earlier issue, released by Haydn Society, of the *Te Deum* and other pieces, was reviewed in these columns in the issue of September, 1953.

The Mass and Symphony *Assumpta est Maria* is one of the twelve works Charpentier wrote in this form. It is a sombre work, dark in hue and unusual in that it calls for an orchestral (strings, flutes and organ) accompaniment. Musically, it is similar to the other works of Charpentier available on records—that is, it shows its Italian origins (Carissimi was one of Charpentier's models) and bears a striking resemblance to the music of Handel who, although chronologically later than Charpentier, also used the same Italian sources.

The performance captured here is a loving one, carefully prepared and one that demonstrates that old, half-forgotten music, if it has genuine merit (as all of Charpentier's does), can be made to live. Naturally music over two hundred years old requires editing

and arranging, and both Charpentier and the listener are fortunate in that a musician of the calibre of Guy Lambert has undertaken the restoration of his scores. With impeccable taste Lambert has prepared this old Mass for modern ears, and the results are a joy to the ear as well as gratifying to one's sense of propriety.

The soloists, chorus and orchestra under the distinguished direction of Louis Martini bring the dusty score to life in no uncertain manner. The recording is excellent, and informative notes are supplied. This is a disc worthy of investigation and highly recommended on all counts. W.

Korean Children's Choir. Korean Children's 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7125) \$5.95.

The sample discs sent to reviewers begin with the following introduction by John Daly, ABC news commentator:

"This is John Daly. How would you like to send a Korean orphan to school for one year in Korea? This is how you can do it. The Korean Children's Choir, 25 wonderful boys and girls from Korea, some of them orphans, have recorded (an) . . . album of humorous and poignant American and Korean folk songs. . . . This record album, 23 songs in all, sells for \$5.95. From the proceeds of each of these albums that you buy, you will be making it possible for some Korean orphan to go to school in Korea for one year. You see how much you can do for so little. . . ."

Fortunately, this disc is a good one, representative of the best that the Korean Children's Choir presented to enchanted audiences in its recent tour of the U. S. However, we strenuously object to being greeted with such an appeal as we sit down to criticize a record. What if we didn't like it? Are we then to be accused of being opposed to supporting Korean orphans? Or, fearing this false accusation, are we being cajoled into approving a bad disc?

John Daly's introduction is not on the discs you will buy in the stores, fortunately for you, so you may purchase this disc because it is a wonderfully thrilling presentation of children's voices singing simple ditties in a completely disarming manner. If you feel better for having sent a Korean child to school for one year (for \$5.95?), so much more will be your reward.

Orff: Catulli Carmina. (Sung in Latin). Elisabeth Roon (soprano); Hans Loeffler (tenor); Wiener Kammerchor; (4) pianos and percussion conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8640) \$5.95.

Back in December of last year, these columns carried a review of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, the first part of his tryptich *Trionfi*. Now the second portion of this intriguing work, *Catulli Carmina*, is available.

To those who bought *Carmina Burana*—a preliminary word of warning—*Catulli Carmina* is nothing (well, almost nothing) like it. The second section of the tryptich is written for soloists, chorus, four pianos and percussion. Some of these latter instruments are of Orff's own invention, one is informed,

and this could very well be, for they sound, at times, like nothing the writer ever heard before.

The text for *Catulli Carmina* was selected from the love poems (the very exact and descriptive love poems, one might add) of the Roman poet Catullus. The work is in five sections, the three middle ones being sung *a cappella*. Now, while the writer found *Carmina Burana* fascinating—remarkable, amazing and wonderful were a few of the adjectives he used—he finds *Carmina Catulli* something a little less than bearable. There is a coarseness about it—perhaps to match the almost medical or clinical exactness of the poems, that he found offensive. Thus one agrees wholeheartedly with Jacques Barzun who wrote, in another connection (in his wonderful book *God's Country and Mine*) "... to suffer through the ear drums as well as to be bored is not my idea of entertainment."

The soloists, chorus and hard working pianists and percussion players under Heinrich Hollreiser do yeoman work, and it may very well be that this review represents a minority opinion.

The recorded sound is good, the notes, text and album are in good taste. For more information about Orff and the tryptich the reader is referred to the December 1953 issue of THE NEW RECORDS. This disc is well worth investigating, but be sure to do your investigating first; do not buy it on the strength of the *Carmina Burana* review.

W.



OPERA

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde—Isolde! Tristan! Geliebter! (Love Duet) (complete). (Sung in German). Martha Mödl (soprano); Johanna Blatter (mezzo-soprano); Wolfgang Windgassen (tenor); Orchestra of the Städtische Oper (Berlin) conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66004) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Fidelio—Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin (recit.); Komm, Hoffnung (aria). One side, and **Wagner: Tristan und Isolde**—Liebestod. (Sung in German). Martha Mödl (soprano) with the Orchestra of the Städtische Oper (Berlin) conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-10" disc (*T-TM-68003) \$2.95.

Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice—Che faro senza Euridice. And **Verdi: Don Carlos**—O don fatale. One side, and **Verdi: Macbeth**—Una macchia e qui tuttora. And **Verdi: Macbeth**—La luce langue. (Sung in German). Martha Mödl (soprano) with the Orchestra of the Städtische Oper (Berlin) conducted by Hans Löwlein. 1-10" disc (*T-TM-68009) \$2.95.

These three discs are among the first Telefunken LP's for American release. In former years, Telefunken records were much sought after as being among the finest recordings available—the writer still owns such outstanding issues as the Mozart *Symphony No. 32* and the Schubert *Symphony No. 5*

in *B Flat*. These two items were models of clarity, balance, exquisite orchestral playing and consummate interpretation. Thus it was with somewhat exaggeratedly high standards that he approached these first LP Telefunken. Alas for all concerned, these three discs not only failed to measure up to the pre-war standards, they failed seriously to challenge the best in this country (RCA Victor, Mercury, etc.); they are below current British, Danish and Austrian efforts.

These three records give a sampling of the art of the young German soprano, Martha Mödl. She sings Isolde, Leonora, Orpheus, Princess Eboli and Lady Macbeth—quite an order! She is at her best in the German operas; her Isolde is a sound, straightforward non-neurotic conception that is refreshing. She is ably abetted by Wolfgang Windgassen and Johanna Blatter in the *Liebesnacht* and does a creditable *Liebestod*. The *Fidelio* aria is very well sung by any standards. It is only when she sings Gluck and Verdi that doubts arise. The *Orpheus*, so very well known, is passably sung, but one has heard far more sensitive performances. The *Macbeth* suffers very definitely in the writer's mind from comparison with the fantastically wonderful recording (unfortunately on 78's and never transferred to LP—an unforgivable omission if technically feasible) by Margherita Grandi and Sir Thomas Beecham. The German language does not help; neither is it complete, for the introduction is lacking as are the parts of the nurse and doctor.

Orchestral work in the Wagner and Beethoven items is under the capable direction of Arthur Rother—the Gluck and Verdi accompaniments under the not-so-sensitive baton of Hans Löwlien. Recorded sound, as indicated earlier, is only fair.

W.

Soutullo y Vert: La del Soto del Parral. (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Chorus and Orquesta Sinfónica Española conducted by Rafael Ferrer. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65000) \$4.95.

Lehar: La Viuda Alegre ("The Merry Widow"). (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Cantores Líricos de Madrid and Orquesta de Cámara de Madrid. 1-12" disc (*MONTILLA-FM-25) \$5.95.

Luna: Molinos de Viento. (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Cantores Líricos de Madrid and Orquesta de Cámara de Madrid. 1-12" disc (*MONTILLA FM-26) \$5.95.

Guerrero: El Huesped del Sevillano. (Sung in Spanish). Soloists and Orquesta de Cámara de Madrid. 1-12" disc (*MONTILLA FM-27) \$5.95.

Here are three *zarzuelas* and a Spanish version of Lehar's "opereta Vienesá," *The Merry Widow*, for consideration. To begin with, however, it might be well to find out what a *zarzuela* is—it is "the Spanish form of what the French call *opéra-comique*; the Germans, *Singspiel*; an opera or operetta in which singing alternates with spoken dialogue." The curious name is taken from the Palace of La Zarzuela where such works were performed for the

pleasure of Philip IV, the then King of Spain. The Palace took its name from the nearby hamlet of La Zarzuela; and finally, *zarzuela*, in Spanish, means a bramblebush.

The three examples of this native form (for, despite the similarities noted above, it is indigenous to Spain) recorded here would seem to be typical examples. They are tuneful, rhythmically persuasive and never particularly dramatic. *La del Soto del Parral* is a pastoral work and is unusual in that it represents the work of two composers, working as a team. *Molinos de Viento* is, as one might suspect from the title, laid in a Dutch locale. The third, *El Huésped del Sevillano* (*The Guest of the Seville*) has a Spanish setting. All are gracefully and competently sung and played by native artists, musicians and conductors. None of the singers have what could be called wonderful voices, but they are nearly always equal to the not too demanding occasions.

One has left the stranger in this group until the end. Why, except for the Spanish speaking population (or for export), a *Merry Widow* in Spanish? Yet, curiously enough, it is a pretty good performance, with lots of verve and some genuine Viennese flavor. The soloists here do not make out too well, however, the music being much more difficult (either that or one has heard it very well sung elsewhere).

Fair recording, notes and stories of the works are supplied. W.

Poulenc: Les Mamelles de Tirésias (complete). (Sung in French). Denise Duval; Marguerite Legouhy; Jean Giraudeau; Soloists, Orchestra and Chorus of Le Theatre National de l'Opera Comique conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35090TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35090) \$5.95.

When confronted with a work such as Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* the writer is always a little confounded. There are two approaches to a burlesque such as this—go along with the joke (if you find it humorous) or pass it by as unfunny and in poor, if not downright bad, taste. The present reviewer found he had no alternative after hearing the piece—the second choice was all he could make.

The play by Guillaume Apollinaire, on which it is based, is full of excesses, bad puns, coarse action and questionable humor. Perhaps it would seem a little funnier on the stage (one is not too sure, however) but Apollinaire's apparent adolescent enthusiasms for the female anatomy and the less printable aspects of our existence is boring. Poulenc has written music to match. That is, there is little musical merit in the score (how could there be?) and the piece rolls on to the end and then stops. After it is over one wonders why he took the time to hear it through.

The writer has just taken time out, as it were, and about an hour or so has elapsed since he wrote the foregoing. On re-reading it he felt it might be a bit too censorious, pontifical almost; however, it must stand, for it was his honest reaction.

As for the soloists in this "buffonerie," they do well, considering the material. Denise Duval is a sprightly Thérèse (Tirésias), Jean Giraudeau, as the husband, also turns in a convincing performance, while the others in the cast are usually effective. André Cluytens directs the score with spirit and dispatch.

The packaging is in Angel's best style and leaves nothing to be desired. The recording is reasonably good. W.

Rachmaninoff: Aleko (complete). (Sung in Russian). Nina Pokrovskaya (soprano); V. Zlatogorova (contralto); Anatole Orfenov (tenor); Ivan Petrov (baritone); Alexander Ognivtzev (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by Nicolai Golovanov. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1309) \$5.95.

Rachmaninoff's youthful *Aleko* receives its first complete recording here by the Bolshoi Theatre. It is a sort of Russian *Pagliacci* (the Jealous husband kills both his wife and her lover) and is, as one might expect of the work of an eighteen year old student, derivative. *Aleko* leans heavily on Moussorgsky and Borodin, particularly the latter's *Prince Igor*.

The soloists are mediocre; the bass (Ognivtzev) is the best of an ordinary lot. It is difficult to recommend a recording such as this—its chief merit lies in its relative unfamiliarity, and after one has heard it several times it is no longer an unknown quantity, rather it is only too well known. The recorded sound is only fair. W.

Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron (highlights). (Sung in German). Soloists, Vienna Chamber Choir and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3041) \$5.95.

One might take exception to the lugubrious tempi of Maestro Moralt as he leads his otherwise excellent forces through these wonderfully tuneful melodies; we happen to prefer our Strauss with a little more snap to it. We've got the complete *Der Zigeunerbaron* (*L-LL-418/9) in our library, and we're very well satisfied, thank you!

Pergolesi: La Contadina Astuta (complete). (Sung in Italian). Angelica Tuccari (soprano), Andrea Mineo (baritone) with Compagnia del Teatro dell'Opera Comica di Roma and Orchestra of Societa del Quartetto (Rome) conducted by Giuseppe Morelli. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-592) \$5.95.

It is difficult to find any reason for the issuance of the recordings of the *intermezzi* and little *farsa* by the numerous Italian composers of the 18th century. Certainly they were not written with any degree of seriousness, nor did the composer expect anything more than a season's "run" from any of them.

Such a piece is Pergolesi's *La Contadina Astuta*, variously known as *Livietta e Tracullo*; *Tracolo*; *Il Finto Pazzo*; and many other names. For this writer, Pergolesi has been made too much of—his early death (at the age of twenty-six) has caused many

people to look on him as another, if earlier, Mozart; which is absurd.

The performance of this opera (if it can be so dignified) is mediocre; none of the singers has more than a passable voice and the direction is staid and commonplace. The disc will be of interest only to collectors of all sorts of Italian opera (quantity rather than quality) or to partisans of the composer. W.



VOCAL

Chausson: Poème de l'Amour et de la Mer. Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. One side, and **French Art Songs.** Gladys Swarthout (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by George Trovillo (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1793) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Romeo et Juliette*—Premiers transports que nul n'oublie! (Berlioz); *Si mes vers avaient des ailes* (Hahn); *Mandoline* (Debussy); *Chanson Triste* (Duparc); *Séparation* (Hillemacher); *Carmen* (Clergue); *Hôtel, Voyage à Paris, Les Chemins de l'Amour* (Poulenc).

Song Recital. Mattiwilda Dobbs (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35094TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35094) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Die Entzückung an Laura, La Pastorella, Nacht und Träume, Heidenröslein, Liebhaber in allen Gestalten* (Schubert); *Auf dem Schiffe, Wiegenlied, Nachtigallen Schwingen, Botschaft* (Brahms); *Die Spröde, Die Bekehrte, Zitronenfalter im April* (Wolf); *Clair de Lune, Notre Amour* (Fauré); *Si mes vers avaient des ailes* (Hahn); *Le Colibri, La Cigale* (Chausson).

Rachmaninoff: (8) Songs. One side, and **Moussorgsky: The Nursery** (7 Episodes of Child Life). Maria Kurenko (soprano) accompanied by Vsevolod Pastukhoff (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8265) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *In the Silence of Night, Lilacs, Summer Nights, The Alder Tree, Oh Cease Thy Singing Maiden Fair, Sorrow in the Springtime, The Soldier's Bride, Vocalise* (Rachmaninoff); *The Nursery*—With the nurse, In the corner, The beetle, The doll's lullaby, The evening prayer, The hobby horse, The cat and the bird (Moussorgsky).

These three discs, widely divergent as they are in musical content, have several things in common—excellent singing and a relatively unhackneyed choice of material.

The most unfamiliar is the Chausson opus which was brand new to this writer who can not remember ever even reading of it anywhere. It turns out to be a magnificent vocal tone poem (if such a phrase may be used) that is a sheer delight from start to finish. It dates from 1893 and is a setting, in two parts, separated by an orchestral interlude, of verses by Maurice

Boucher. The sections are entitled *La Fleur des eaux* (The Flower on the Water) and *La Mort de l'Amour* (The Death of Love). The poetry is obscure, and Victor did not see fit to reproduce the texts (they do supply an English paraphrase) although Chausson himself said, concerning the poem and its first performance "... it is true the verses are hermetic. But what shall we do about it? The idea of printing the verses is excellent, and it is the only solution I see." Miss Swarthout and M. Monteux do a sensitive and musicianly job, one that merits the highest praise. The other side contains more familiar and, one is sorry to note, more commonplace material with the notable exception of the Berlioz excerpt that is, unfortunately, rather poorly done—the accompaniment of piano, harp and cello and the absence of a chorus all militate against the performance.

Matiwilda Dobbs is, beyond a doubt, one of the finest singers before the public today. Her *Song Recital* is intelligently selected and intelligently sung in a voice that falters neither mechanically nor artistically. Miss Dobbs sings Schubert with rare insight and Wolf with understanding. The French group is notable for the clarity and grace (inherent characteristics by the way) so often missing from other performances.

Maria Kurenko's previous recordings of Rachmaninoff's songs have been favorably noticed in these columns (TNR Jan. '52) and it must suffice to say that the present disc is no exception. The Moussorgsky cycle is new to discs and the performance here is an ideal one from every angle.

Good recording and usually adequate notes (Angel best here) are features of all three discs. W.

Amalia Rodrigues Sings Fado and Flamenco.

Amalia Rodrigues (vocals) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*ANG-64002) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *FADO: Uma Casa Portuguesa; Lisbon Não Sejas Francesa; Fado da Saudade; Coimbra. FLAMENCO: Lé Ré Lé; No Me Tires Indiré; Doce Cascabeles; Tani.*

We think our readers will get the idea of this disc if we quote from the notes on the jacket:

"Fado is a generic term, and deals—as the Portuguese poet José Regio said—with 'an irresistible tragic determination.' This obsession with fatality—the *Fatum*—is found in the very origin of the word *fado*. Amalia Rodrigues is undoubtedly the greatest interpreter of the *fado* in all its many forms. But she is also an extraordinary singer of *flamenco* which, like the *fado* of its neighboring country, shows the Oriental influence of the Moors who for so long occupied Spain and Portugal.

"Dressed all in black, draped in a heavy black ankle length shawl, the beautiful Amalia sings . . . and holds her audiences in the palms of her expressive hands. . . ." Naturally, we couldn't see her hands; but we were impressed with the spirit in which Amalia delivers her songs. *Coimbra* will be recognized by its American title, *April in Portugal*.

Chopin: (17) Polish Songs. (Sung in Polish). Doda Conrad (bass) accompanied by Henry Jackson (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8310) \$5.95.

Chopin as a song composer will be relatively unfamiliar to many record collectors, although many of the songs on this disc have been recorded before by the same artist (on HMV 78's) and also by Jennie Tourel and Maria Kurenko. These two latter records have not come within the writer's purview, but it would be hard to conceive of more imaginative or more sensitive performances than these by the excellent Polish basso, Doda Conrad.

Musically speaking, the songs follow the pattern established by Chopin in his piano pieces; that is, the frame is small, the workmanship exquisite and the feeling nationalistic (in the best, in the 19th century sense of that much maligned word). This group of seventeen songs, collected after his death and arbitrarily assembled as Opus 74, represent various emotional states, as indicated by the titles *A Wish; Go, Leave My Sight; What She Likes; My Sweetheart; Sad River* and so on.

Doda Conrad sings them all with complete understanding. His rich bass is eminently suited to the idiom, and even in the more lyric passages he is able to infuse a sense of tenderness and beauty that is very fitting. Of course, in the songs obviously written for a man's voice, *The Warrior, Songs from the Tomb, and The Drinking Song*, Conrad is in his element. These last three are outstanding in a disc filled with fine singing.

The accompaniments by Henry Jackson are excellent, as is the recording. Mr. Conrad has supplied notes and an English translation of the songs. This is a record worth investigating from all angles; musical, artistic and aesthetic. W.

Songs of Hugo Wolf. Hans Hotter (baritone) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35057TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35057) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (3) *Michelangelo Lieder* ("Wohl denk'ich . . .", "Alles endet, was entstehet" and "Fühlt meine Seele das ersehnte Licht"); *Coph-tisches Lied 1; Coph-tisches Lied 2; Grenzen der Menschheit; Prometheus; Harfenspieler Lieder; Geselle, woll'n wir uns in Kuten hülten?*

The distinguished German baritone (sounding very much, at times, like an equally distinguished bass) Hans Hotter, is presented by Angel Records in a recital of Wolf *lieder*. To those who are familiar with Hotter's work, the bald statement of fact will be sufficient—the remainder of this notice is for those who have not yet made his or the composer's acquaintances.

The genius of Wolf has been widely discussed and written out in the fifty-odd years since his death in 1903. He came at the end of both the 19th century and at the close of the Romantic era. He was, thus, the heir of not only Schubert, Schumann and Wagner, but of the entire century. His

settings of poems ranged, as on the present disc, from Michelangelo, Goethe and Heyse to many other authors such as Eichendorff and Morike. Wolf's "romanticism" however, is not that of the earlier composers of his century; as Alfred Einstein points out (*Music in the Romantic Era*) by Wolf's time the "Romantic movement was getting tired of itself—tired, at all events, of the heavy passion, the 'philosophical' depths, (and) the sentimentality which it had been taking so seriously."

To return to the soloist and the *lieder* on this record, one can state at once that they are sung to perfection. Herr Hotter has a big voice, easily produced; and his musicianship, understanding and style mark him as a singer of superlative merit. In fact, this disc may be considered as the most satisfactory recording he has made to date. It is, in addition, one of the choicest song recitals of the year.

Angel's recording is excellent, the package attractive and the texts and translations are supplied. One could have asked for better notes on the general subject of Wolf and the *lieder*—those furnished are on the sparse side. W.

Fauré: La Bonne Chanson. (Sung in French). One side, and **Gounod: Biondina.** (Sung in Italian). Hugues Cuenod (tenor) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5278) \$5.95.

Two song cycles, one of them new to records, are contained on this new Westminster disc.

Most interest, naturally, attaches to Gounod's *Biondina*, which is sub-titled *A Musical Novel in Twelve Chapters* (there are eleven songs and a prologue), for it will probably be new to most the readers of these columns. *Biondina* was begun while Gounod was sitting out the Franco-Prussian War in England; the texts were selected from a collection of sonnets by Giuseppe Zeffira, and Gounod dedicated his score, as did Zeffira his poems, to an English lady, Mrs. George Weldon. The texts have been selected to recount a sad love story. The first eight songs are grouped under the somewhat Victorian title "The Roses" (this is the happy part) and the last three are called "The Thorns" (!) and relate *Biondina's* illness, death and burial. All this is set to mellifluous music that is typical of Gounod's clear and spontaneous melodic gifts—not great music but delightful withal.

Fauré's *La Bonne Chanson* is much better known and is considered by many to be much better music—in all events it is very different. Gounod's work is strongly Italianate, Fauré's equally French. This point is made primarily because of M. Cuenod's manner of singing them—he does both in an almost identical fashion! He is, by and large, more successful with the Fauré because the lack of sensuous beauty in his voice is not so apparent. In *Biondina* a caressing, open voice is needed for both language and music, and the soloist does not seem

able to summon up either.

Franz Holetschek's accompaniments are models of good taste, the recording is fine; notes and complete texts with English translation are supplied. W.

Purcell: The Masque in "Timon of Athens." One side, and **Purcell: The Fairy Queen** (excerpts). Margaret Ritchie (soprano) with l'Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Anthony Lewis. 1-12" disc (*OL-50029) \$5.95.

(21) Parisian Songs of the 16th Century. L'Ensemble Vocal Fernand Lamy conducted by Fernand Lamy. 1-12" disc (*OL-50027) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Las je m'y plains, Dictes sans peur* (Sermsy); *Pourquoy donc ne fringuerons nous, Sur la rousee* (Passereau); *L'amour la mort et la vie, Il estoit une fillette, Ma peine n'est pas grande* (Janequin); *Que n'est-elle aupres de moi* (Certon); *Plaindre l'ennui de la peine* (Hesdin); *O doux regard* (Gardane); *Amour si haut* (Sandrin); *Quand je te veux raconter* (Nicolas); *Tourt ce qu'on peut en elle voir* (Rore); *En ce beau moys* (Costely); *Amour me tue* (Goudimel); *Rossignol mon mignon, Fièrue cruelle, Prince la France te veut* (Le Jeune); *Rossignol mon mignon* (Boni); *Mon père et ma mère* (Bonnet); *Fretillarde amoureuse pucette* (Anon.).

The two Oiseau-Lyre discs for consideration here offer a series of problems for the reviewer. To begin with the Purcell items are not identified in any particular manner—the *Fairy Queen* music is obviously incomplete although the jacket notes do not clearly indicate the fact. Presumably the *Timon of Athens* is "complete" but without a score or more definite information than is on the cover notes, one can only guess. This writer remembers, very well, a fine performance of the *Fairy Queen* music on a couple of ten inch Allegro records (TNR Nov. '50) and thus looked forward with considerable interest to the present recording. Alas, the sound is fuzzy and dull, the performance only fair, and Miss Ritchie does not sound at all like the soprano who sang so gloriously in the recent recording of Handel's *Messiah*. *Timon of Athens* also suffers from poor recording and dispersed direction.

The *Parisian Songs of the 16th Century* is a collection of some twenty-one *chansons* selected from among the more than four thousand published in Paris between 1528 and 1612! Many are here recorded for the first time, not having been available in modern notation until last year. They offer a fascinating variety of contrasts, while all stemming from essentially the same sources. The Lamy Ensemble, obviously a well-trained and intelligent group of singers, sings the music with a sense of style that never falters.

Sound on this disc is better than the others issued by l'Oiseau-Lyre, although it is still not up to what one has come to expect. The notes, while all too brief, do contain some pertinent information on the composers, but the package is innocent of texts, a particularly unfortunate omission in this case. W.

Chansons de Jacques Prévert. Cora Vaucaire and Michèle Arnaud (soprano) and Eric Amado (baritone) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7018) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Les Feuilles Mortes* (Vaucaire); *Deux Escargots s'en Vont à l'Enterrement* (Vaucaire); *Immense et Rouge* (Amado); *Cet Amour* (Vaucaire); *Le Noël des Ramasseurs de Neige* (Amado); *Le Tendre et Dangereux Visage de l'Amour* (Arnaud); *Demons et Merveilles* (Arnaud); *La Complainte de Gilles* (Arnaud); *Barbara* (Amado).

Chansons de Francis Lemarque et Léo Ferré. Michèle Arnaud and Micheline Dax (sopranos); Eric Amado and Aimé Doniat (baritones); Rémi Clary (tenor); with Orchestra conducted by M. Philippe-Gérard. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7017) \$4.

CONTENTS: *A Paris* (Amado); *Toi, tu n'es-sembles à personne* (Arnaud); *Bal, Petit Bal* (Dax); *Tous les Mots* (Doniat); *D'Amour et d'Eau Fraiche* (Amado); *Les Routiers* (Clary); *L'île St. Louis* (Clary); *Les Forains* (Arnaud); *La Chanson du Scaphandrier* (Clary).

Charles Trenet et Jacques Hélian Vous Invitent à la Danse. Charles Trenet (baritone) with Jacques Hélian and His Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*ANG-64004) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Boum; Vous Etes Jolie; J'Ai ta Main; En ce Temps-Là; Printemps à Rio; Biguine à Bango; Bonsoir, Jolie Madame; Mes Jeunes Années; La Folle Complainte; La Mer; La Romance de Paris; France-Dimanche; L'Ame des Poètes; N'y Pensez Pas Trop; Il Pleut dans ma Chamber; Dans les Rues de Quebec; Le Bon Roi Dagobert; La Jolie Sardane; Dans les Pharmacies; Y'a d'la Joie.*

"Bravo Pour le Clown!" Edith Piaf (diseuse) with accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*ANG-64005) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *La Goulante du Pauvre Jean; Et Moi . . . ; N'y Va Pas Manuel; Les Amants de Venise; L'Effet qu'tu m'Fais; Jean et Martine; Johnny, tu n'es pas un Ange; Bravo Pour le Clown!*

Stars Over Paris. Trio Charpin. 1-10" disc (*VX-VX-640) \$3.50.

CONTENTS: *Minouche; Soufflons la Chandelle; Moi, Moi; Darling, Je Vous Aime Beaucoup; Sous La Pergola; Le Petit Souper aux Chandelles; Trop, Trop, Trop; Doucement, Doucement.*

We rather suspect that, if you are planning a trip to Paris in the near future, this is the sort of thing you'll hear in the smart clubs over there. Here is more of it all done to a French turn with modern reproduction.

PIANO



Debussy: *Images* (Sets I & II). One side, and Debussy: *Pour le Piano*. And Debussy: *Estantes*. Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35065TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35065) \$5.95.

Some duplication here, for Gieseking has already released *Images* (Bks. I & II) and *Estantes* on Columbia. However, the far superior packaging, the fact that one can obtain a factory-sealed disc at the same price, the *Pour le Piano* and the superb Angel reproduction and glassy smooth surfaces incline us towards the present disc.

ORGAN



Organ Music of Giovanni and Andrea Gabrieli. Giuseppe de Dona (organ). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8470) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Intonazione e ricercare; Canzone: La Spiritata; Fantasia del VI° tono; Fuga del IX° tono; Fantasia del IV° tono; Ricercare Ricercare del VII° e VIII° tono; Ricercare a quattro voci del X° tono; Toccata del II° tono (G. Gabrieli). Toccata; Canzone ariosa; Fantasia allegra; Ricercare del V° tono a 2 sogetti; Ricercare del XII° tono (a quattro voci)* (A. Gabrieli).

Vox continues exploring the field of early Italian composers with a most interesting disc, played by an Italian organist, recorded in Italy. We must once again needle the manufacturer for not naming the organ used for the recording. To us it is the same as not naming the symphony orchestra on a record, or not naming the string quartet; it is doubly unfair on organ records, for every organ is an individual, custom-built, and often an historical, instrument. And the building in which it stands accounts for much of the quality we hear. So let's get the name of the organ on the labels every time.

Whatever the organ is on this disc, it is a beautiful instrument and has been reproduced very well. Our organist is not addicted to overloading the registration with assorted squeaks, squeals and high-pitched mutations, which pleases this reviewer immensely. There is a generous use of unison voices and warm and pleasant combinations. Considering he is playing some of the earliest music written for the organ, this will come as a surprise to many, who think such music must sound perky, quinty, and squeaky.

Andrea Gabrieli, born in Venice about 1510, and his nephew, Giovanni Gabrieli, born in Venice in 1557, are considered the oldest and most authentic representatives of the Venetian School. The musical forms which we hear on this disc (and concisely explained in the jacket notes) include: *Ricercare, Toccata, Canzona, Fantasia, Fuga, and Intonazione*. While they have not the structural development and

complexity of later music, these sixteenth century examples have an easily accessible charm which everyone can readily enjoy. This is particularly true when they are played with the warmth and clarity we find in the present performances. We can recommend this as a most enjoyable organ disc as well as one of real musical worth. S.

Organ Interlude. Richard Ellsasser (organ). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-198) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod); *The Lord's Prayer* (Malotte); *Largo* (from "Serse") (Handel); *In a Monastery Garden* (Kettelby); *Barcarolle* (from "Tales of Hoffman") (Offenbach); *Elegie* (Massenet); *Flow Gently, Sweet Afton* (Spilman); *The Bells of St. Mary's* (Adams).

What a shame! This lovely organ disc could have been so wonderful, but it was spoiled for us by an inordinate amount of surface noise—inexcusable in this day and age. We should probably not have reviewed this disc, except that Ellsasser has developed no little following of late, and we wanted to caution our readers to hear this one first.

BAND



Marches. Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble conducted by Frederick Fennell. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40007) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Fairest of the Fair, Manhattan Beach, The Black Horse Troop, Daughters of Texas, Rifle Regiment, Corcoran Cadets, Hands Across the Sea, Semper Fidelis* (Sousa); *Pieces of Eight* (Jenkins-Neff); *March Carillon* (Hanson); *Cheerio* (Goldman); *His Honor* (Fillmore); *Our Director* (Bigelow); *Glory of the Gridiron* (Alford); *Pride of the Illini* (King); *National Emblem* (Bagley).

Following the successful "American Concert Band Masterpieces" (*ME-MG-40006, TNR Feb. '54), Mercury issues this month a disc by the same Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble under Frederick Fennell, showing that this group can play marches as well as symphonic band material. These numbers have just the right amount of snap to them to suit us; and the reproduction is out of this world!

MISCELLANEOUS



History of Music in Sound (Vol. 3: *Ars Nova and the Renaissance*). Edited by Dom Anselm Hughes. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6016) \$11.90.

CONTENTS (by types of music): French Polyphony, 13th & 14th Cents.; Guillaume de Machaut; Italian Polyphony, 14th Cent.; English Part-Songs; English Church Music, early 15th Cent.; John Dunstable; Chansons, 15th Cent.; Guillaume Dufay; Burgundian Chansons, 15th Cent.; Johannes Ockeghem; Netherland Church Music; Josquin des Pres; English Church Music, late 15th Cent.; Robert Fayrfax; John Taverner; Organ Music, 16th Cent.; Instrumental Ensemble, 15th & 16th Cents.

Last month we reviewed Volume 2 of the "History

of Music in Sound" series, issued by RCA Victor, at great length, praising both the idea and the execution very highly. There is no doubt that this series will be of prime value to students of musical history; however, we should be the last to deny that general interest in this series will probably not be very high, and therefore we cannot devote the space necessary to fully cover this, the second release. Suffice it to say that it follows, chronologically, Volume 2 (Vol. 1 still has not appeared), and is every bit as scholarly a job. An 82-page booklet accompanies each set, and the reproduction rates with the best.

Harp Music (Vol. 1). Nicanor Zabaleta (harp). 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-509) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Divertissement* (Caplet); *Danza de la Hoguera* (Pittaluga); *Lolita la Danseuse* (Tournier); (3) *Short Pieces* (Halffter); *Fantasy* (Mudarra); *Popular Variations* (Narvaer); *Pavane with Variations* (Cabezón); *Villancete* (Anon.); *Pavane* (Milan); *Romance* (Palero).

Harp Music (Vol. 2). Nicanor Zabaleta (harp). 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-523) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Prelude, Op. 12, No. 7* (Prokofiev); *Sonata* (Taileferre); *La Source* (Tournier); *Impromptu, Op. 21* (Roussel); *Sonata* (1939) (Hindemith); *Sonata* (1953) (Granville-Hicks).

Harp Music (Vol. 3). Nicanor Zabaleta (harp). 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-524) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Solo fur die Harfe* (C. P. E. Bach); *Variations on a Swiss Theme* (Beethoven); *Sonata* (Mayer); *Sonata* (Rosetti); *Andante con Variations* (Krumpholtz).

Salzedo: (8) Dances for Harp. Carlos Salzedo (harp).

One side, and **Salzedo: (8) Transcriptions for Two Harps.** Carlos Salzedo and Lucile Lawrence (harps). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10144) \$4.85.

CONTENTS, SIDE 2: *La Joyeuse* (Rameau); *Gavotte* (Martini); *Play of the Winds* (Dandrieu); *Spinning Wheel, On Wings of Song* (Mendelssohn); *Spanish Dance No. 5* (Granados); *Clair de Lune* (Debussy); *Steel* (Salzedo).

Concert Miniatures on the Harp. Ann Sacchi (harp). 1-10" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-403) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Theme and Variations* (Haydn—trans. Salzedo); *Toccata* (Loeillet—trans. Grandjany); *Giga* (Corelli—trans. Stefano); *Harmonious Blacksmith* (Handel—trans. Salzedo); *Arabesques Nos. 1 & 2* (Debussy—trans. Reniè); *Legende, Op. 18* (Zabel).

Here is a feast for lovers of harp music! Of particular note is the fact that all of the works on the three Esoteric discs were actually written for the harp—they are not transcriptions. Volume 1 consists of works of 16th Century Spanish composers plus contemporary French and Spanish authors; Volume 2 is strictly contemporary; and Volume 3 contains

works of 18th Century composers. Nicanor Zabaleta is a harpist of extraordinary talent; his American debut was in 1934 with the New York Philharmonic at Lewisohn Stadium, and the same year he appeared at the Robin Hood Dell in Philadelphia.

Like Señor Zabaleta, Carlos Salzedo has pioneered in making the most venerable of present-day instruments a virtuoso one, having even gone so far as to redesign the harp along more modern lines; we learn from the jacket notes that more than half of all harps in use today are the Lyon and Healy "Salzedo Model." The *Suite of Eight Dances for Harp* is in eight sections: *Gavotte*, *Menuet*, *Polka*, *Siciliana*, *Bolero*, *Seguidilla*, *Tango* and *Rumba*. Like the Zabaleta discs, absent are the all too familiar glissandi so typical of harp transcriptions; here, rather, is music for the harp in its own right. Not so successful, but quite pleasant, are the transcriptions on the reverse; *Steel* is modern and suggests that the harp can be made to sound like a foundry.

The little disc of *Concert Miniatures* is a vehicle to display the talent of Ann Sacchi. These transcriptions are such as might be attempted by advanced students of the harp, and are ingratiating.

The reproduction of all five of these discs is sharp and clear, pointing up the touch of each artist.

Concert Guitar. Gustavo Zepoll (guitar). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1024) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Serenade* (Noble); *Zapateada Criollo* (Noble); *Minuetto in A* (Prado); (3) *Mexican Folk Songs* (arr. Ponce); *Doublee in B minor* (Bach); *Preludio No. 1 in C* (from "Well Tempered Clavier") (Bach); *Romance* (Anon.—arr. Fortea); *16th Century Pavane* (Sanz); *16th Century Pavane* (Milan); *Leyenda* (Albeniz—trans. Segovia).

Piano—The Romantic Fabric. Samuel Sorin (piano). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1038) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Fantasie in F minor* (Chopin); *The Maiden and the Nightingale* (from "Goyescas") (Granados); *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12* (Liszt); *Nocturne for the Left Hand Alone* (Scriabin).

Beethoven: (32) Variations in C minor. One side, and **Beethoven: Late Bagatelles, Op. 126.** Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1039) \$4.

The Morelia Cathedral Organ. Alfonso Vega Nunez (organ). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1056) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Fantasia y Fuga en Sol minor* (Bach); *Concerto No. 2 in A minor* (Vivaldi); *Fugue in G minor* ("Little") (Bach).

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. New Orchestral Society of Boston conducted by Willis Page. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1067) \$4.

Lizzy Miles: Queen Mother of the Rue Royale. Lizzy Miles (vocals and piano) with Buglin' Sam De-Kemel and his Jazz Band. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1181) \$4.

We are grouping all of the latest Sounds of Our

Times Releases under one heading, and listing them under MISCELLANEOUS; mostly because a more miscellaneous bunch of discs could hardly be imagined!

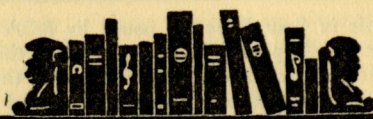
Why has Emory Cook and his Sounds of Our Times label been so phenomenally successful? This question we have asked ourselves again and again. Certainly he is making some of the best (technically) records today; every one is above reproach on that score. He does not have "name" artists, but they are good—many better than name artists (we have never heard of Gustavo Zepoll, but just one hearing of his new disc would indicate that he's one of the best guitarists playing today). How does Cook find these artists? How do collectors discover that Cook has found them? (Through TNR?)

Samuel Sorin is no Horowitz or Serkin; but he is pianissimo when he should be, and can really hammer the Liszt item when it calls for it. Hambro is somewhat better known—at least to readers of TNR. The piano reproduction accorded both is second to none.

The organ at the Morelia Cathedral is the original German Walker organ, installed in 1905 and unchanged today. It has 70 ranks and is, of course, of the baroque type. Mr. Cook has captured the acoustics of the Cathedral with exceptional fidelity, and Señor Nunez plays well.

We were prepared to be disappointed with Willis Page's Beethoven's *Fifth*, expecting a pedestrian performance; we are afraid that it is, and the high fidelity doesn't save it. Mr. Cook doesn't need Beethoven in his catalog; he should stick to Rail Dynamics (*SOT-1070) and Barrelhouse Pianos (*SOT-1035, TNR Feb. '53). (Again, we don't understand why anyone would want a recording of a Barrelhouse Piano, but we understand it was a tremendous seller.)

The jacket notes state that Lizzy Miles needs no public address system; we can believe it. An ample woman with a more than ample voice, she sounds like what Bessie Smith would have sounded like if she could have had the good fortune to have been recorded by Emory Cook. New Orleans jazz at its loosest and craziest best; all the tunes are either written in G or transcribed to G, because Sam DeKemel's (slightly battered, U. S. Army) bugle only plays in G.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classie Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓢ Indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

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SEPTEMBER, 1954

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

A NEW ENTRY into the field of high fidelity demonstration records comes from RCA Victor this month, entitled "An Adventure in High Fidelity." It is quite a disc! It contains *An Adventure in High Fidelity*, the first symphonic work ever commissioned by a recording company expressly for a record album, by Robert Russell Bennett. This takes little more than half a side, and this side is filled with *The Orchestra in a Nutcracker Shell*, wherein various themes from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* are played on solo instruments, thereby enabling the listener to hear the pure solo tone of the clarinet, bassoon, flute, piccolo, oboe, French horn, violin, two muted violins, trumpet, trombone, tuba, harp, guitar, celeste, various percussions, and a snatch of viola, violoncello and double bass.

Side 2 begins with a section entitled "How High Is Your Fidelity?", and it consists of a section of Bennett's *An Adventure in High Fidelity* played three times: (1) with unrestricted frequency range; (2) with frequency limited to from 100 cycles per second to 8,000 cps; and (3) with frequency limited to from 200 to 5,000 cps. Supposedly, if you have a fine instrument and a superior ear, you will hear differences in the three versions, although we suggest that they will not be apparent in an occasional hearing; you must become familiar with (1) by repeated playings, and then, if both you and your set are good enough, you can hear what you are missing in (2) and (3).

The next section is devoted to "The Human Voice in High Fidelity," and consists of the following selections, with the artists' names in parentheses: R. Strauss: *Amor* (Roberta Peters); LaSerna: *El Jilguerito con pico de oro* (Victoria de los Angeles); Grieg: *A Dream* (Jussi Bjoerling); Tosti: *L'Ultima Canzone* (Leonard Warren). We presume that these

were all done in "unlimited range," for they sound simply elegant.

The disc concludes with the section "New Orthophonic in Pops," and offers the following, with artists' names in parentheses: *Bahama Buggyride* (Hugo Winterhalter); *Moonlight and Roses* (The Three Suns); *My Impossible Love* (Henri René); *Eddie and the Witch Doctor* (The Sauter-Finegan Orchestra).

An illuminating booklet accompanies this disc listing its contents, giving technical data about the various recordings contained on it, presenting a glossary of hi-fi terms (transient response, distortion, dynamic range, etc.), and containing an interesting foreword and introduction to the disc by Robert D. Darrell, one of America's outstanding musicologists. Mr. Darrell touches upon a point near and dear to our heart: namely, that our hi-fi phonograph is just as personal to us as our toothbrush; we like to hear it set the way we like it, and we don't want anybody fooling with the knobs, any more than we want someone using our toothbrush. All right, so we have a tin ear; we may have a false tooth, too; but don't touch our knobs!

As we said, this is quite a disc! It comes packed in a box-type album with a foam rubber cushion for your turntable, included with each record; the price is \$6.95 for the complete package. If your local dealer cannot supply it, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

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"Easy Lessons in Relaxation" is the title of a 10-inch 78 rpm disc which recently came to our desk, and in playing it and following its instructions we almost fell asleep! And us with a whole stack of discs to review for this issue! Here is a badly needed little record, recorded

by Arthur T. Dalton for Relaxation Records; back of this company is Arthur Barnett, who, you may recall, has previously issued recordings on "How To Teach Your Parakeet To Talk" (TNR Jan. '52) and "How To Teach Your Dog To Obey" (TNR Apr. '52).

Side one gets you ready for side two by telling you to loosen your tie, remove your glasses, get seated comfortably in a chair or lie down on a bed, etc.; then side two tells you to contract various muscles (frown, clench your fists, pretend you expect to be hit in the pit of the stomach by a cannon ball, and so on) and then relax them. Our only suggestion is that if you play this disc before retiring, you should play it on a phonograph that shuts off automatically.

"Easy Lessons in Relaxation" comes on 1-10" 78 rpm disc packed in a cardboard sleeve, and sells for \$1.95; if your local dealer cannot supply you, you may order from the publisher of this bulletin.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-two years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning September 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Debussy: Nocturnes ("Nuages," "Fêtes," "Sirènes"). L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris with the Vocal Ensemble of Paris conducted by Jean Fournet. One side, and Ravel: **Rhapsodie Espagnole**. And Ravel: **Menuet Antique**. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3048) \$5.95.

Debussy: Jeux—Poème dansé. One side, and Debussy —arr. Ansermet: **(6) Epigraphes antiques**. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-992) \$5.95.

The Epic record of the Debussy *Nocturnes* and the Ravel *Rhapsodie Espagnole* is also available on London conducted by Ansermet (*L-LL-530), and if you

think the Epic reproduction sounds better on your phonograph then that is the one to buy. For us, Ansermet has more to say in matters Debussyian and Ravelian than M. Fournet. These performances are indeed good, but they do not possess, for us, that delightful combination of subtlety and authority which Ansermet imparts. The Epic reproduction is good, not as overly heavy in the bass as is usual with them; but the London recording is of their best, which makes it mighty good. The Epic disc has as a filler Ravel's *Menuet Antique*, in its first recording in orchestral version. This is a product of the 20-year-old Ravel, his first published work (keyboard version) which he orchestrated about five years later. It is easy on the ears, but it does not have the suavity of Ravel's more mature works.

Another Debussy disc by Ansermet is always something worth hearing. This one has two lesser known works; the *Jeux* has only one other LP version—by Sabata, coupled with Respighi's *Fountains of Rome*. We would prefer not only Ansermet for *Jeux*, but also the coupling; if you want Respighi's *Fountains*, the usual coupling is the same composer's *Pines of Rome*, in any one of several good recordings. Back to Debussy and Ansermet, the unusual work on this disc is the Ansermet orchestration of *Six Epigraphes Antiques*, first published during World War I in two forms, for piano duet and for piano solo. Originally they were sketches for flute, celeste and harps, conceived as incidental music to accompany a recitation of the set of poems entitled "Chansons de Bilitis" by Debussy's friend, Pierre Louys. These little pastels have been orchestrated with impeccable taste and skill by one well qualified for the task, and Ansermet plays his orchestrations with the same qualities of taste and skill. It is hard to realize that these are not Debussy's own orchestrations. This is a novelty of real merit, and we would hope to see this music on the programs of our major symphony orchestras in the years to come. Needless to say, reproduction on both sides of the disc is superb. S.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). One side, and **Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120**. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-930) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36. Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3029) \$5.95.

Of this group of famous *Fourths*, we could say that two-thirds of the three *Fourths* are excellent, while the other is only fair. The excellent ones are the pair on the London disc. The distinguished Viennese conductor, Josef Krips, joins the ranks of those who seek music rather than speed in the Mendelssohn "Italian" Symphony. As with Beecham and Dorati, this is a mannerly rather than mannered read-

ing, and it is much the better for such an approach. There is no feeling of dragging, nor is there a feeling of unnecessary rushing. Beecham, Dorati, and Krips are so close in interpretive excellence that it is virtually a matter of which couplings you prefer (Beecham couples the Beethoven *Eighth*; Dorati couples the Mozart No. 40). As for Krip's reading of the Schumann *Fourth*, it abounds in romantic warmth and serenity—a Viennese specialty—and does not have the brilliance and tautness of Szell. There is, fortunately, no excess of sentimentality; it is just a beautiful statement of the score. We enjoyed it immensely, and feel that Krips has one of the best played and best reproduced versions available. This, then, is a splendid disc on both sides, and one to be highly recommended.

The Tchaikovsky *Fourth* suffers from a wholly exaggerated and completely abnormal and unreal bass in the reproduction—it is gigantic and uncalled for, and before long it gets rather annoying. Willem van Otterloo has the time of his life sailing through this score in a fashion which could only be described as melodramatic, although some folks may find it thrilling. It is the type of performance by a second-rank conductor, designed to bring down the house at a "pops" concert. Compared with the sound values displayed in the Kubelik-Chicago recording (*ME-MG-50003), this one is a circus. Epic's reproduction is rather striking, except for the ugly bass, and a tendency towards over-prominence of solo voices which are out of perspective. Toward the end of the first movement there is either too much pre-echo or else there is a terrible false entrance in the strings, for one hears a faint note ahead of time while Otterloo is whipping up the frenzy. We suggest Kubelik for this work (or Fricsay, or several others of an earlier vintage). S.

Delius: Paris—The Song of a Great City. One side, and **Delius: In a Summer Garden.** And **Delius: Summer Night on the River.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-923) \$5.95.

Sibelius: The Legends of Lemminkäinen, Op. 22. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Stockholm conducted by Sixten Ehrling. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8226) \$5.95.

In appearance, Anthony Collins somewhat resembles Sir Thomas Beecham. In matters musical there is also some resemblance. For one thing Mr. Collins is quite versatile in his repertoire, as a glance at his London recordings will reveal. He won the highest praise from nearly all critics for his recording of the Sibelius *First Symphony*, and his other discs have often found favor. His two previous Delius discs for London have been well received; but we think this one is the best yet. As with Sir Thomas, Anthony Collins has a definite feeling for the music of Delius. Many of us think there is no one like Sir Thomas

with a Delius score, but every conductor has his own characteristics, and the differences between them are what makes the whole game interesting. If Collins lacks a shade of the subtlety of Beecham, who else does have quite the subtlety of Sir Thomas? But a Collins performance of Delius' music is no less precise and well prepared than any other and may even be a bit more solid and richer in texture. There is no denying Collins is indeed a valid interpreter of the music of Delius. His performances here are beautiful, and the reproduction is superb.

Summer Night on a River is already available on LP, but the other two, *Paris* and *In a Summer Garden* receive their initial hi-fi recordings here. While all three have been recorded by Beecham, Collins travels the same ground with a different effect here and there, and the fine reproduction helps to make these recordings most convincing. *Paris* is sub-titled "The Song of a Great City;" it is, however, not a descriptive tone poem of the city so much as it is Delius' own personal memories connected with it. It is a bright work well laced together with all that is characteristic of Delius.

Sibelius' *Lemminkäinen Legends* have been previously issued on LP by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (*C-ML-4672) and by Jensen and the Danish Radio Orchestra (*L-LL-843); both of which feature reproduction very noticeably superior to the present disc. We would recommend either of the others, both of which are good interpretations, Ormandy's having a gorgeous panoply of orchestral sound as well. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 in E-flat ("Romantic").

Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. Three sides, and **Mahler: Kindertotenlieder.** (Sung in German). Herman Schey (baritone) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 2-12" discs in album (*EPIC-SC-6001) \$11.90.

The notes written for this set by Klaus George Roy are good reading, and they present a good case for Bruckner for those who have yet to accept his music. The "Romantic" is the most popular of the Bruckner symphonies and has been committed to LP's by three other conductors of whom only Klemperer has a somewhat different approach than the others. Klemperer's version fits on two LP sides and features a generally more forward thrust all along the way. It was a performance that we found rewarding. Otterloo plays the *Fourth* with a traditional approach. His reading and the Epic type of reproduction will find high favor with many Brucknerites. Epic's typically heavy bass response adds even more gravity to the already heavy Bruckner orchestration, but it is mighty impressive at times, we must admit. The Hague Philharmonic plays with eloquence and a well sustained body of tone, prime requisites for Bruckner performances. Those who take their Bruckner seriously will want to compare this set with Klemperer (*VX-PL-6930), and possibly with Abendroth (*UR-

URLP-401), the latter one also on two discs. We have a slight preference for Klemperer's tightly knit reading, preferring to wallow around in the *Seventh*, although we admit Otterloo has appealing eloquence in reading and reproduction.

The jacket notes state that this is the first LP recording of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* by a baritone voice, for which it was originally designed. As such it will doubtless be of interest to those who admire this sublime expression of emotional music and text. Whether such consummate altos as Ferrier and Anderson convey this music with more effect than the present baritone is no easy matter to decide when one has been used to hearing it sung by alto voices. Herman Schey has a fine baritone voice, sympathetic but not sentimental. Epic's reproduction is superb, with the voice close-to, clear and distinct and yet with a good orchestral background. The notes carry both German and English texts which may be easily followed. We would call this a beautiful performance and recording of *Kindertotenlieder*. S.

Amirov: Caucasian Dances. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Hermann Abendroth. One side, and **Arensky: Silhouettes, Op. 23.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Felix Lederer. And **Liadov: Baba Yaga, Op. 56,** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Walter Schartner. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7117) \$5.95.

Glère: The Bronze Horseman (Ballet Suite). Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Adolf Fritz Guhl. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7121) \$5.95.

Françaix: The Emperor's New Clothes (Ballet Suite). Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Kurt Stiegler. One side, and **Nicodé: Carnival Scenes Suite.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Hilmar Weber. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7122) \$5.95.

Lalo: Le Roi d'Ys—Overture. And **Lalo: Norwegian Rhapsody.** One side, and **Lalo: Namouna Ballet Suite No. 1.** L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3049) \$5.95.

Four discs of contemporary music and not a dissonance in the lot! Little known works, these, (except the *Le Roi d'Ys Overture*) but every one is pleasant and interesting. We especially liked *Baba Yaga*, a piece describing the ride of the witch of Russian folklore in her mortar, sweeping her way clear with her pestle. Musical humor is rife in Françaix' *The Emperor's New Clothes*, based on Hans Christian Andersen's tale of the three tailors who convince the king that they have a material visible only to honest men and who persuade the king and his courtiers that they actually see this material (because they don't want to confess that they are dishonest). The

king has a ball in his new suit, and all goes well until a child cries out, "But the King hasn't any clothes on!"

Glère's ballet seems to be a staple of Soviet repertory; we've never seen it, but the story is typical Russian tragedy: boy can't marry girl for lack of money, storm and flood wash away girl's house, boy is saved, finds girl's house, dies of cold and exhaustion. Nice music, though.

The reproduction of all of these discs is excellent.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. L'Orchestre Symphonique de la Radiodiffusion Nationale Belge conducted by Franz André. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66018) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: La Grande Pâque Russe Overture, Op. 36. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphony No. 2, Op. 9 ("Antar").** Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50028) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: The Tale of the Invisible City of Kitezh—Suite. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: La Grande Pâque Russe Overture, Op. 36.** Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. And **d'Indy: Istar, Op. 42.** L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Colonne conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7115) \$5.95.

Tanayev: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 12. State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Alexander Gauk. One and one-half sides, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Overture on Russian Themes, Op. 28.** State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by A. Kovalev. 1-12" disc (*A-440-AC-1208) \$5.95.

Of the more than a dozen recordings of *Scheherazade*, the present disc belongs in with the three or four very best versions. Because of its newer reproduction some may prefer it to Ormandy, Monteux, and Ansermet. Because of a straighter reading some may prefer it to Stokowski; and it should be compared with the Dorati-Minneapolis disc, which is certainly one of the very best. On its own merit, this new Telefunken disc is a splendid reading, beautifully recorded, one of Franz André's finest phonographic achievements. We would not trade Ormandy, Stokowski, or Dorati for it if we already owned one of them, but if we were starting from scratch, André would have to be considered.

As usual, Mercury's disc is superb. Paul Paray, one of the truly great conductors of our day, leads a brilliant performance of the colorful *Russian Easter Overture*, being more than a match for Ormandy because of newer reproduction. Paray's version of the *Antar Symphony* proves to be the most interesting statement of the music on discs, but despite the beauty of parts of it we do not care too much for the work. If you like it, this is a great performance; both sides enjoy the very finest of reproduction.

Listening to the Bavarian Orchestra under Graunke try to play the *Russian Easter* after hearing Paray is a trying experience—they are positively terrible and play like rank amateurs. Furthermore the reproduction yields a string tone the like of which we have never before encountered; it resembles birdlike squeaks. We did not have the heart to try the *Legend of Kitezh*; but George Sebastian, a dependable conductor, does *Istar* quite well and the *Colonne Orchestra* is well recorded.

The real novelty of this group is the Taneyev *Symphony No. 1* (actually his fourth in order of composition, but since publishers seem to be more important than composers, this is another instance of the stupid idea of numbering a man's fourth symphony his first). While it has never enjoyed much popularity on these shores, we found the work engaging and followed it with interest. It is a full-blown romantic type of work with melodic charm and a solid technical construction. The Rimsky work is an early effort, later revised, and is pleasant listening. Both works are very well performed and well recorded. This disc is worth investigating for something out of the ordinary that is kind to the ears. S.

Vaughan Williams: English Folk Song Suite. And **Vaughan Williams: Norfolk Rhapsody.** One side, and **Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis.** And **Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on Greensleeves.** Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5270) \$5.95.

Coates: London Suite. One side, and **Coates: London Again Suite.** Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4039) \$2.50.

For those who have yet to become acquainted with the wonderful music of Ralph Vaughan Williams, this disc is a choice introduction, for it contains his most appealing and accessible scores. These four not-too-long works are music as beguiling and luscious as you are likely to hear from any contemporary pens, and yet it is all music of the highest stature.

Norfolk Rhapsody is one of a projected three which never materialized; it is built on several folksongs, a Vaughan Williams specialty. We do not recall having heard it before and found it top-drawer Vaughan Williams. The other three works have been heard previously on LP, and Sir Adrian Boult's statement of them all is eloquence and style born of knowledge and conviction. Where some may favor Stokowski's reading of the *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, others may prefer the type of reproduction with which Westminster sets forth Sir Adrian's reading. We are inclined a shade towards Stokowski's orchestral precision. However, taking the record as a whole, it offers such fine performances and reproduction of four Vaughan Williams scores that is quite irresistible. We recommend it highly to anyone who

does not yet own any of the music on it and guarantee rewarding listening. Westminster is to be congratulated on such a good choice and such logical couplings. Incidentally, the popular *Greensleeves* tune, found on the juke boxes a year or so ago, is as dishwater compared to this treatment of the beloved folksong. Vaughan Williams setting is sheer orchestral magic.

Eric Coates is about as far removed from Vaughan Williams as Victor Herbert is from Richard Wagner. But then, Herbert's music is mighty good in its class, and so is Coates'. One cannot live on caviar, filet mignon and champagne alone. Using the same orchestra as Sir Adrian, Coates draws spirited and rollicking performances of his ear-tickling pieces, and Decca has supplied reproduction the very equal of Westminster. For \$2.50 the Decca disc is as great a bargain in light music listening as we have come across in many a day. The three sections of the *London Suite* are Covent Garden, Westminster, and Knightsbridge (a capital march); the three sections of *London Again Suite* are: Oxford Street, Langham Place, and Mayfair. When the record was over we could only say, "neat." S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 4 in C minor ("Tragic"). One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat.** Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Dean Dixon. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5274) \$5.95.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-445) \$5.95.

The Schubert *Fourth* and *Fifth* appeared a couple of months ago on Decca, in performances which could be argued to have easily the merit of the present ones, but which could as easily be proved to have not nearly the sparkling reproduction. Westminster has captured the fullness of a symphony orchestra with striking realism. Dean Dixon leads the good London orchestra in readings of solid merit and fine finish; our only reservation is that the *Fifth* is a shade heavier than it appears here. The lighter touch may have been applied by either Dixon or the recording engineers, or a little by both; but you may not feel that way when you hear it, for it is admittedly good orchestral playing vividly recorded. With the exception of Beecham's *Fifth*, this disc can hold its own with any others in the lists.

The Schubert "Unfinished" and the Mozart No. 40 are a popular coupling, played with Viennese sweetness, warmth, and roundness. Prohaska uses the full string section (so it sounds) for the 40th and is in no hurry to complete his task; it is played just the way folks like to hear it. His Schubert has a bloom and richness that will also please the majority. Both of these performances are recorded with an appropriately full and warm tonal quality, including

a rich bass quality. Comparison with the dozen and a half other versions of each of these works is hardly feasible, but if the coupling appeals to you, the present Vanguard disc is certainly a choice selection, and carries our recommendation. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35080TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35080) \$5.95.

According to the Schwann catalog, this is the seventeenth LP recording of the "Pastoral," and on this hot summer evening of record reviewing we admit to being rather critical, hair-splitting, and uncompromising about new versions of the perennial "Pastoral." It must be admitted that the Philharmonia Orchestra plays well—they always do for Karajan—and that the reproduction is very full and rich in texture without sacrificing clarity. There is good definition of solo instruments and good perspective with a fair resonance. It is a good reproduction, and it is a good performance technically. But Karajan has a very fussy way with the first two movements which result in textures too thick for the music even though the tempos are reasonable. Beecham and Walter and some of the others create a far more pastoralish climate. When it comes to the storm movement, Karajan unleashes a hurricane that is impressive without being too overwrought. The lovely shepherd's song is again a bit heavy for our taste, even if it is nicely played by the orchestra. For orchestral performance and reproduction, Karajan fares with the best of them; but you may find that Beecham, Furtwängler, Kleiber, Steinberg, or Toscanini will paint a better picture of the *Pastoral* for you.

This symphony is roughly contemporary with the *Piano Concerto No. 4* in G, in which Beethoven is also at his most serene. We always prefer the light touch in both these works. There is created an atmosphere that is either right or not quite right when we hear this work, it is a very subtle thing and hard to pin down. The recording had us uneasy and did not cast a spell as have previous recordings. If you think that is nonsense, then you may well be impressed with Karajan's reading and the fine reproduction. S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 2 in C, Op. 61. Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9715) \$5.85.

In the July 1954 issue of TNR we reviewed a Brahms *Symphony No. 4* conducted by Leonard Bernstein and played by the Stadium Orchestra (composed almost entirely of regular players of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra). The reading found favor with us, and we were more than pleased to be able to praise the work of an American-born and wholly American-trained conductor. The present disc, also recorded at Carnegie Hall, is probably part

of the same recording session, and like the Brahms enjoys what we think is Decca's best American reproduction (of classical LP's) to date.

There are at least three other good LP's of the Schumann *Second*. We have always been fond of the Papst-Munich Philharmonic disc, which is by now exceeded in quality of reproduction by others. Endowed with good reproduction as well as a superb interpretation and orchestral playing of the first order is the Stokowski disc (*V-LM-1194). Another fine performance is by Szell, although he is inclined to be too severe in the outer movements for us. We believe those who take time to compare will find a Schumann *Second* to suit their tastes, and that the present disc by Bernstein will be the choice of many. It is built on solid lines, mindful of the romantic nature of the work, but kept within a nice framework. In addition it has a reproduction of warmth and richness, with a good clarity and fair resonance. And we cannot but feel pleased that it is an all-American production, from the podium on down. All four of the Schumann symphonies are increasing in popularity, and well do they deserve it. None is lovelier than the *Second*, a good one to start with in case your library does not house any of them. S.

Prokofiev: Chout (ballet suite). One side, and Falla: *El Sombrero de Tres Picos*—Dances. St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8257) \$5.95.

Prokofiev: The Gambler, Op. 49—(4) Portraits. One side, and Kabalevsky: *Colas Breugnot*—Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Schuechter. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3112) \$4.85.

Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet (Suite No. 3). One side, and Prokofiev: *Cinderella (Suite No. 2)*. Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Stasevitch. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1304) \$5.95.

Petrassi: Don Quixote (ballet suite). One side, and Respighi: *Antiche Danze ed Arie per Liuto (Suite No. 1)*. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-447) \$5.95.

Continuing the admirable series with the St. Louis Orchestra, Capitol issues a disc with music for which Vladimir Golschmann has a flair. His *Three-Cornered Hat* can hold its own with any of the others in the catalog, and your choice could well be governed by the matter of couplings. This disc offers the second recording of Prokofiev's *Chout* ballet suite. The nine sections describe quite pictorially the goings on of this bizarre ballet, and away from the stage action we cannot feel too strongly for this music; however, it is considered a good Prokofiev work, so if you feel that way about it, here is a fine recording of it. The Falla side of this disc has less than twelve minutes of music on it; both sides feature good sound.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 O indicates 45 rpm.

The MGM record brings two "firsts" to the LP lists, both of merit. The *Colas Breugnon* overture is heard fairly often in concert and on the air, the *Fête populaire* is heard occasionally, but the other two sections, *National Calamity* and *Insurrection* combine to make the complete suite interesting listening. Prokofiev, rather than compound an orchestral collection from various instrumental interludes in his opera *The Gambler*, chose to go through it from beginning to end and collate all of the motifs and devices used to define each character. The result is a suite in four sections bearing these titles: *Alexis*, *The General* and *The Grandmother*, *Pauline*, and *Dénouement*. This is good Prokofiev and, to our ears, more interesting than some of his output. Both sides enjoy perceptive performances and good reproduction.

The list of Prokofiev LP's is growing fast, and the disc of two ballet suites issued by Concert Hall must be counted among the most attractive of his works. Many will argue that Prokofiev was at his best in ballet music, and this pair will uphold that argument well. The *Cinderella Suite* presented here is lovely music, while the *Romeo and Juliet* is yet another master's portrayal of this famous story. Both works are admirably performed by the Bolshoi Orchestra and accorded the type of reproduction we expect these days.

Petrassi's *Don Quixote* brings to LP for the first time an outstanding contemporary Italian composer. Plenty could be said of the man and his works, but in limited space it will have to suffice to say that this sampling shows him to be a skilled craftsman in the modern manner of economy in orchestration. His ballet suite, in seven sections, heard here is thoroughly enjoyable. Respighi's *Suite No. 2 of Ancient Airs and Dances* has appeared previously on this label under the same conductor; the present recording of *Suite No. 1* is music that is just as graceful and charming. Both sides enjoy fine performances and splendid reproduction. S.

Taylor: Through the Looking Glass, Op. 12 ("Five Pictures from Lewis Carroll"). Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40008) \$5.95.

MacDowell: Suite No. 2 in E minor, Op. 48 ("Indian"). Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40009) \$5.95.

Two more additions to Mercury's Olympian Series of hi-fi fame, this time some more of Howard Hanson's superb work. Deems Taylor's *Through the Looking Glass*, though modern, is romantic in character and easily deserves the beautiful reading that it gets. Divided into four parts (*Dedication* and the *Garden of Live Flowers*; *Jabberwocky*; *Looking-Glass Insects*; *The White Knight*), it is Taylor's musical impression of the priceless tales of Lewis Carroll.

Certainly one of the most important of MacDowell's

works, the *Indian Suite* is representative of the American composer at the height of his powers. He makes use of aboriginal American idioms, forming his principal themes out of variants of Indian melodies: a harvest-song, war-song, women's dance of the Iroquois, and a love song of the Iowas.

Howard Hanson evidently has made one of his prime objects in life the presentation to the American public of deserving works of contemporary American composers; and it is to his everlasting credit that he does so without injecting Hanson into the performances, which is the highest compliment presently at our command. Not even a mention need be made of Mercury's reproduction save the one word: Olympian.

Svendsen: Carnival in Paris and Alfven: King Gustav II Adolf Suite—Elegie. One side, and **Alfven: Midsommervårka.** And **Nielsen: Maskerade—Dance of the Cockerels.** And **Sibelius: Romance in C.** Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by John Hollingsworth. 1-12" disc (*MGME-3082) \$4.85.

The two principal selections in this group of works by Scandinavian composers are Svendsen's *Carnival in Paris* and Alfven's *Midsommervårka*. The former was written while Svendsen was a guest of Wagner at Bayreuth, and it is presumed that the great master's advice was sought by his pupil and friend. *Carnival in Paris* depicts a Mardi Gras celebration as it occurred in ancient times, with its boisterous and gay masquerade in which royalty and commoners mixed for a night of fun and jollity. . . . Alfven's *Midsommervårka* (Midsummer Vigil) is a work in a somewhat similar vein. It depicts a peasants' festival that takes place in rural Sweden on Midsummer's Eve (June 24th). A great feast is prepared, bonfires are lit and dancing and reveling continue into the early morning hours of the next day. . . . The three shorter pieces that complete this group add considerable variety. Alfven's *Elegie* is a somber bit from the incidental music to a deep, dark tragedy. Nielsen's *Dance of the Cockerels* is an amusing little interlude in his opera *Maskerade*, and the *Romance in C* of Sibelius is a delightful piece for string orchestra.

Antheil: Symphony No. 5. One side, and **Josten: Endymion** (ballet). Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert Haefner. 1-12" disc (*SPA-16) \$5.95.

Reger: Variations and Fugue on a Merry Theme by Hiller, Op. 100. Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*SPA-51) \$5.95.

George Antheil's *Symphony No. 5*, written in 1947 on commission from Eugene Ormandy, is a three movement symphony*designed to be a joyous work. The composer termed it his "Joyous" symphony written to combat what he terms a tendency of new American symphonies to be tragic and

bleak. He has been working in this direction since 1928, developing a style which is rather breezy. There is a veiled and synthesized American folksong in each of the movements: in the first there is a trace of our popular music and bands of the 1920-45 era, with their wild breaks, their particular American style. The second incorporates fragments, welded into Antheil's own melodies, of things remembered from youthful campfires when he was a Boy Scout camping on the upper Delaware. The third, less folk-songy, is a synthesis. This is the composer's own description of the music and states the case accurately. It is an interesting work to hear—once anyhow; whether or not you wish to live with it is something you can best decide after hearing it. Herbert Haefner and the Vienna Philharmonia are hardly the artists one would expect to hear perform this American-as-hot-dogs work. We admire them for the bang-up job they do; they have surely kept the wiener schnitzel from mingling with the hot dogs, and it has quite an American ring to it. The reproduction is as brilliant as the scoring.

Werner Josten's *Endymion* Ballet bored us completely. SPA's notes give a synopsis of the scenario, but no other information whatever about Josten or when, where, how, or why he wrote the work, and so we wonder just why it ever was created.

SPA's jacket notes about the Reger are also very sketchy, and we admit needing them to sell us on the work, for the music certainly did not. If you can't go to sleep with this music, you really need a strong sedative. S.

Liszt: (4) Tone Poems for Orchestra. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dean Dixon. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5269) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Les Preludes*; *Battle of the Huns*; *Mazepa*; *Orpheus*.

Once quite popular, Liszt's tone poems have fallen somewhat into disfavor (with the exception of the thrice-familiar *Les Preludes*) these days; it is hard to understand why, for they are quite listenable. The young American Negro conductor, Dean Dixon, renders four of them in a more than creditable manner, being accorded the most thrilling reproduction one is likely to come across, even in these days of super hi-fi. Our wife and kiddies are away for the summer, so we took this disc home and played it with all the stops out; it is a miracle that no plaster fell while the Huns and the Visigoths were at each others' throats.

Mozart: Cassation in G, K. 63. One side, and **Mozart: Cassation in B-flat, K. 99.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Sacher. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3043) \$5.95.

We are delighted to welcome these lovely little cassations to the recorded repertory; they are indeed charming and perfect for summertime listening. That there are not more of them recorded on LP's is most

regrettable; we recall that there were several of them in the old L'Oiseau-Lyre (78 rpm) catalog, and we enjoyed them all.

"Cassation" comes from the Italian *cassazione*, meaning annulment, cancellation or quashing; in music it is associated with the idea of "farewell." Cassations, serenades and divertimenti all sound pretty much alike. We mention this in case you have never heard a cassation; if you like Mozart's serenades or divertimenti, you will undoubtedly like his cassations as well.

Typical Epic reproduction, which is to say quite brilliant and close-to.

Preludes and Intermezzi from the Opera. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Italiana. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50159) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *La Traviata*—Preludes to Acts I & III; *Aida*—Prelude; *La Gioconda*—Prelude; *Manon Lescaut*—Intermezzo; *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Intermezzo; *Adriana Lecouvreur*—Intermezzo; *I Quattro Rusteghi*—Intermezzo.

If you are in the mood for some orchestral music from the opera, here is a nice little program all arranged for you. While there are probably better performances of each work available, these are all played in a straightforward manner to which few could take exception.

R. Strauss: Metamorphoses. Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Jascha Horenstein. One side, and **Stravinsky: Symphonie des Psaumes.** Orchestre National et Choeurs de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35101TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35101) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 6 in D, Op. 61. Helen Schnabel (piano) with the Vienna Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*SPA-45) \$5.95.

Chopin: Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. Friedrich Gulda (piano) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1001) \$5.95.

The Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 6 is an arrangement of the Violin Concerto in D, an arrangement made by Beethoven himself—and before you throw up your hands and condemn it, hear it. Like most others, we were prepared for a monstrous indiscretion on the master's part for doing this arranging job, but after you have heard any part of it, or all of it, you realize that Beethoven, himself a pianist, knew full well what he was about when he arranged

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 () Indicates 45 rpm.

the violin concerto for piano. If this work were played in concert as often as any of the other Beethoven piano concerti, it would in a very short time establish itself on a plane of equal popularity with the other piano concerti. The score of the orchestral parts remains unchanged, the piano part and the cadenzas are new. There are many passages which any unbiased musician must admit sound better on piano than by violin. The whole work is most pianistic, and emerges as a fine piano concerto, far better than 90% of the efforts of other composers who wrote a piano concerto directly in that form.

Helen Schnabel plays the piano part with splendid style and with neatness of execution. We have heard the orchestral accompaniment played with more razor-edged precision, but this is a good job. The reproduction is excellent, of the non-resonant studio variety. We thought many passages in this work sounded better with piano because it offers a more distinctive contrast to the string sections of the orchestra; you will notice orchestral parts that seem fresh because of the piano against them rather than the violin. In all it is a most fascinating disc and one which all piano concerto lovers will find highly interesting.

The Chopin *Concerto No. 1*, his second in order of composition, has not been treated to too many really good LP phonographic versions. Horszowski (*VX-PL-7870) was reviewed favorably in these columns about a year ago, and the present disc is about the only comparable recorded version. With the benefit of fine reproduction and expert orchestral accompaniment by Boult, Friedrich Gulda now has the best all-around version of this concerto on LP; in fact, we found this performance more interesting than usual. We recommend it as the best in the catalogs at this time. S.

Shostakovich: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op.

35. Margot Pinter (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Günter Wand, with Kurt Bauer (trumpet). One side, and **Khachaturian: Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra.** Wilhelm Posegga (violoncello) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Rudolf Kempe. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7119) \$5.95.

About a year ago we reviewed the first recording of the Khachaturian *'Cello Concerto*, a work which we found most enjoyable and appealing. The recording was by Knushevitsky and the USSR Orchestra under Gauk (*VAN-VRS-6009), which we thought well played and very well recorded, our only gripe being that the work took 34 minutes and was spread over two 12" LP sides. Urania has made no such error, for their generosity has caused them to place two movements of the 'cello concerto on one side, with the short third movement allotted to the beginning of the second side, and then the Shostakovich *Piano Concerto* fills out the balance of side two. On comparing the two performances and recordings of

the Khachaturian we must admit finding the Vanguard disc a little better as far as the excellence of the soloist is concerned, for he seems more secure in several of the tricky passages. This concerto is fiendishly difficult for the 'cellist, and it may take one of the world's two or three acknowledged masters of this instrument to encompass the technical complexities of the score without blemish. We had the feeling that Posegga could have lived with the work a while longer before committing it to discs for posterity. Kempe and the Leipzig Orchestra get around the elaborate orchestral score without any difficulty.

Margot Pinter and Kurt Bauer take care of the piano and trumpet parts, respectively, of the Shostakovich *Piano Concerto* in a fashion which we found highly pleasing and properly exciting, with Günter Wand waving the conductor's wand over the Berlin Radio Orchestra in exemplary fashion. This team manages to give the others who have recorded the work—Aller, Joyce, and Pressler—a run for their money. Comparing the several discs of this spirited work, we would say it is give and take among them, and it comes out about even, with the matter of which coupling you prefer being a deciding factor. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op.

23. Geza Anda (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. One and one-half sides, and **Delibes: Coppelia**—Valse lente. Geza Anda (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35083LP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35083) \$5.95.

LP recordings of the most popular piano concerto now number eighteen, and among them are several excellent performances. The older favorites include Rubinstein, Horowitz, and Curzon. Some recent issues are by Solomon, Uninsky, and Cherkassky. We were most impressed, and said so in these columns, by the Cherkassky reading, a rather fresh individual and unhurried approach; that seemed to be a minority opinion. The present reading by Geza Anda is also of the unhurried variety, with speed and keyboard pounding not a part of his plan. The performance may be considered a bit too light for some folks, but it is a good, honest statement of the music, played with a fluent technique. Alceo Galliera is a generally sympathetic accompanist, and the reproduction of the orchestra, as well as of the piano, is thoroughly rich and realistic. For those who want a high voltage reading of this work, Anda and Galliera will be disappointing; but those who like to hear romantic music played broadly will find the present disc worth investigating. We are still inclined to prefer Cherkassky (*D-DL-9605) but admit there are other LP's of the work with their own merits, including this one by the promising young Geza Anda.

The Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto* is spread over two sides of the disc, with enough room left for an encore, and a most charming salon piece it turns out

to be. The lovely *Waltz* from "Coppelia," as arranged by Dohnányi, is played with lighthearted grace and proves to be delightful listening. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 18 in B-flat, K. 456. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 19 in F, K. 459.** Hans Henkemans (piano), with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3047) \$5.95.

This LP represents the fourth and third recordings, respectively, of the *Concertos* Nos. 18 and 19. Epic's "close to" reproduction may appeal to you, but you must take Henkemans' note perfect but uninspired performances, too.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Quintet in C, K. 515. Barylli Quartet with Wilhelm Huebner (violin). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5271) \$5.95.

Mozart: Serenade No. 10 in B-flat, K. 361. Wind Ensemble of the RIAS Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66006) \$5.95.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 17 in D, K. 334. Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5276) \$5.95.

Three Mozart chamber works appear this month, all previously adequately represented in the LP catalogs; we must say, however, that we are impressed with the present recording of the *Quintet in C, K. 515*—a beautiful reading and just right reproduction.

A word about the packaging of Telefunken LP's. They are housed in very thin paper sleeves (about half the usual weight) and then inserted, open side in, in a stiff transparent envelope (like celluloid). If they are kept in this manner, they will be well protected; however, it is extremely difficult to slip the thin paper sleeve into the celluloid envelope; and if one stores the disc just in the paper sleeve, the sleeve will become dog-eared in no time. This is not a major criticism; readers who customarily store their LP's in LP Cases (TNR Dec. '52) can ignore the criticism completely.

Poulenc: Sextette for Piano and Wind Instruments. One side, and **Hindemith: Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2.** The Fine Arts Wind Players, with Leona Lurie (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8258) \$5.70.

A first LP recording of Poulenc's *Sextette for Piano and Wind Instruments* is offered by Capitol this month. The Frenchman's compositions for a small orchestra of wind instruments are very singular in that they give the impression of vulgarity without ever descending to it; the *Sextette* illustrates this very well, and it makes an apt coupling for the Hindemith *Kleine Kammermusik*, subtitled "Quintet for Wind Instruments." About fifteen years ago Columbia issued a 78 rpm recording of the Hindemith piece; it was

only moderately well received, as was typical for "modern" music in that era.

The Fine Arts Wind Players exhibit here an understanding of the works and a fine rapport; and Capitol's "FDS" recording technique highlights the selections perfectly, we think. Recommended to those who can take a little dissonance or who are looking for some "off-the-beaten-path" chamber works.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in A, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"). David Oistrakh (violin) and Lev Oborin (piano). One and one-half sides, and **Leclair: Sonata in D, Op. 9, No. 3.** David Oistrakh (violin) and Vladimir Yampolsky (piano). And **Ysaye: Sonata in E for Violin Solo, Op. 27, No. 3.** David Oistrakh (violin). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6024) \$5.95.

More tasty morsels for the vigilant little band of Oistrakh admirers this month; and unlike some of his more recent releases, the reproduction on this Vanguard disc is sparkling and brilliant. Comrade Oistrakh can really make his fiddle talk, and he more than holds his own against formidable competition on the lovely *Kreutzer Sonata*.

Franck: Quartet in D. Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1182) \$5.95.

Franck: Sonata in A. One side, and **Prokofiev: Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 80.** David Oistrakh (violin) and Lev Oborin (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6019) \$5.95.

About a year ago the WQXR Quartet recorded the *Franck Quartet in D* (*PLM-1010) (TNR June '53), and this disc was warmly praised in these columns. Owners of the Polymusic record would not wish to replace their copy with the present recording; however, the Concert Hall release by the Pascal Quartet is of high caliber, and prospective purchasers are advised to hear both.

Albeit David Oistrakh is one of the world's great violinists, we cannot say much for the Vanguard recording of the *Franck* and *Prokofiev Sonatas*. We won't say the reproduction is poor; but the violinist sounds as though he's right in your lap, while the pianist seems to be in the next room.

Brahms: Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1. One side, and **Brahms: Sonata No. 2 in E-flat, Op. 130, No. 2.** Jacques Lancelot (clarinet) and Annie D'Arco (piano). 1-12" disc (*OL-50030) \$5.95.

C. P. E. Bach Chamber Recital. Collegium Pro Arte. 1-12" disc (*OL-50017) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonata in D for Flute and Continuo*; *Trio in B minor for Flute, Violin and Continuo*; *Duo in E minor for Flute and Violin*; *Solfeggetto for Harpsichord*; *Quartet in G for Harpsichord, Flute, Viola and Violoncello*.

If you wish to add this lovely pair of Brahms *Sonatas* to your library, you would certainly pick the performances of Leopold Wlach and Joerg Demus

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
() indicates 45 rpm.

(*WEST-WL-5237, TNR Apr. '54) over the present version for reproduction; we prefer Reginald Kell and Horszowski (*ME-MG-10016, TNR Oct. '50), for although the reproduction is somewhat inferior to Westminster's, it is still mighty good and better than L'Oiseau-Lyre's.

The music of Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach never appealed to us much, probably because we (unfairly) compare him to his father; but since the reproduction of this L'Oiseau-Lyre disc is somewhat below today's standards, we can find nothing to recommend it.

CHORAL



Palestrina: Missa Papae Marcelli. One side, and **Music from the Lowlands: 15th & 16th Centuries.** Netherlands Chamber Choir conducted by Felix de Nobel. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3045) \$5.95.

As more Masses are reaching records, it is to be expected that one of the greatest of them all will receive more than a single recording. And so we find the third LP release of Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli*, one of the finest polyphonic creations, as well as one of the most beloved Masses. It is a masterpiece of polyphonic construction, in which the individual lines combine to form the most beautiful of harmony. The rhythmic freedom, the clarity of text embodied in the writing, every facet of this work is considered a model of its kind, and the whole is acknowledged a masterpiece. Even more than all of that, it is a moving experience to listen to this supremely wonderful music. The jacket notes claim that one aspect of this performance is the fact that the music is sung at or very near the actual pitch notated, namely with the tonic note of C (or a high B). Rather than the mellowing tone color of a performance pitched a third lower, we find here a brightness of color of unique effectiveness, and the high range of the tenors (frequent high A's) produces a sound of soaring elevation which a more conservative register would not offer.

The reverse of the disc offers choral music from the Lowlands of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries with these composers represented: Joannes Ockeghem, Jacob Obrecht, Josquin des Prés, Josquin Descanio, Cornelius Schuyt, Jan Sweelinck, Jan Tollius, and Orlando Lassus. Three sacred numbers are sung in Latin, the others are mostly secular pieces sung in Italian. There is some exceptionally fine choral singing to be heard on this side, and the music is of the highest calibre, for some of the greatest contrapuntists of all time are represented. The Netherlands Chamber Choir is a marvelous instrument with an amazing flexibility under perfect control. Their tonal quality features soprano and also tone of the "boychoir" variety—very clear and pure—and it serves this type of music perfectly. As the reproduction of the disc is fine, nothing but praise can be accorded this effort. S.

Stravinsky: Symphonie des Psaumes. (Sung in Latin). Orchestre National et Choeurs de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Jascha Horenstein. One side, and **R. Strauss: Metamorphoses.** Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35101TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35101) \$5.95.

Stravinsky wrote his *Symphonie des Psaumes* in 1930, and in the intervening twenty-four years the score has been hailed as a modern masterpiece. Stravinsky has elaborated on the *Symphonie* in his *Memoires* and delivers himself of the astonishing statement that here, as elsewhere, his music "has no expressive function." If one can accept this idea, then the work will be acceptable, for expressive it is not (to this writer) although the late Lawrence Gilman found in it "music of intricate and subtle poignance," which could, of course, mean almost anything. The performance by Jascha Horenstein and the Choeurs and Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion is an excellent one, an authoritative exposition of the score that has clarity and style if little emotional impact or meaning. The Psalms used, for those interested, are numbers 39, 40 and 150 (KJV). There are two other versions of this music on discs; one by Ansermet that has its adherents and the other by the composer himself.

The other side of the disc is devoted to a first recording of the late Richard Strauss' *Metamorphoses*. The period of time in which it was written is historically interesting: March/April 1945; small wonder that Strauss wrote *In Memoriam* on the last page. It was written for (and is played here by) twenty-three stringed instruments: 10 violins, 5 violas, 5 'celli and 3 double-basses. It is a fascinating work, one with philosophical overtones (there are "quotations" from the *Eroica* and *Tristan und Isolde*) and it certainly requires more than one hearing to extract all the meaning. Like the *Symphonie des Psaumes* it is very well played and recorded. W.

Stravinsky: Les Noces. (Sung in English). One side, and **Stravinsky: Mass.** (Sung in Latin). And **Stravinsky: Pater Noster.** And **Stravinsky: Ave Maria.** (Sung in Latin). Soloists, New York Concert Choir and New York Concert Orchestra conducted by Margaret Hillis. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8630) \$5.95.

Among the "masterpieces" of modern music Stravinsky's *Les Noces* has always occupied a high position. It seems a little strange, then, to find that this Vox disc is only its second LP recording. The earlier Allegro issue (Dresden Opera Chorus and orchestra) was not available to the writer for comparative purposes.

Writing in 1933, Constant Lambert (*Music Ho!*) noted that "*Les Noces* is . . . possibly the only really important work that Stravinsky has given us." And

later offers this astute criticism, "Seen on the stage where the dynamic rhythms are given an additional force by Nijinska's monumentally constructed and austere choreography, *Les Noces* has an undoubted nervous and emotional appeal; but heard in the concert hall, the ear soon wearies of a design on one plane only."

The performance recorded here is an energetic one and bears out to the letter the late Constant Lambert's remarks. There are, undoubtedly, many who have been waiting for a good recording and performance of this music and, technically as well as artistically, the job here has been well done. The soloists are adequate, the "orchestra" and chorus obviously well rehearsed.

The other side features the Mass (which is on a much lower inventive plane than *Les Noces*) which was written for a small chorus of male voices (boy sopranos and altos) to fulfill a desire, one is informed, for "cold music, absolutely cold." This is a new reason for writing music and this reviewer is completely at sea. He can only report that the Mass sounds austere, reasonably melodious and otherwise not overly distinguished.

The *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria* are short works of about a minute and a half's duration each. The former dates from 1926 and the latter from 1934. They are quiet, dignified and very similar to the old chants they are intended to resemble. Recording is good throughout, and texts and notes have been provided. W.

Bach: St. John Passion (complete). (Sung in German). Gunthild Weber (soprano); Sibylla Plate (contralto); Herbert Hess (tenor); Paul Gümmer (bass); Kantorei der Dreikönigskirche (Frankfurt) and the Collegium Musicum Orchestra conducted by Kurt Thomas. 3-12" discs in album (*OL-50023/5) \$17.85.

This is the third recording of Bach's *St. John Passion*, a work that was relatively unfamiliar until the advent of LP and tape recording. Its very unfamiliarity makes it difficult for the average music lover to appraise. Based on one person's reaction (which is, after all, all any review is) the present performance does not do justice to Bach's music, for the writer found it dull.

The soloists are like the majority recording today (with the usual notable exceptions)—how good they are depends, to a considerable extent on your standards. This reviewer may have exaggeratedly high ones, for he found them mediocre. They sing all the notes in reasonably accurate pitch but, after that, there is nothing. The chorus is well trained (most choruses are nowadays), and they do well. Kurt Thomas undoubtedly had ideas as to how he wanted the work to sound; but, somewhere along the line, he was defeated.

Of the earlier recordings, that on VOX (TNR Jan. '51) is still the best recorded performance of a work that, it seems, could stand a really first rate

performance and recording.

The sound on these Oiseau-Lyre discs also leaves something to be desired, being muddy in spots and generally not up to present day standards. Also worth noting is the complete absence of the text. And at these prices. . . W.



OPERA

Arrieta y Corraera: Marina (complete). (Sung in Spanish). María Caballer (soprano); Fernando Bañó Ferrando (tenor); Luis Sagi Vela, José Luis Lobo (baritones); Joaquín Deus (bass); Cantores Líricos de Madrid and Orquesta de Cámara de Madrid. 2-12" discs in folder (*MONTILLA FM-23/4) \$11.90.

The opera *Marina* has had only phonographic history in this country. The work started as a *zarzuela* (Opera-comique) but was later transformed into an opera and as such had its first performance in Madrid, at the Teatro Real, on 16 March 1871. The composer Emilio Arrieta y Corraera (1823-1894) did most of his studying in Italy and his music bears the mark of this training. Some further light can be thrown on Arrieta by mentioning two of his pupils—Breton and Chapi.

Marina was first recorded in the late Twenties with what can be only regarded nowadays as an almost legendary cast: Capsir, Lázaro and Mardones. The writer never heard this recording, but he heard of it—now, after hearing the present LP version, he wishes he had been able to acquire the earlier set.

The music of *Marina* is reminiscent of *Faust* and other operas of that character. It is a string of ensembles and arias, all very melodious, well constructed and not too dramatic. It requires, however, a cast of better than average singers which, unfortunately, is not in evidence here. The soprano, María Callaber is, perhaps, the best of the lot, but the part requires a voice of exceptional agility, something Señora Callaber does not possess. There are several notable lapses from pitch to upset the critical (or even the not-so-critical) listener. The men are all less than average. The role of Jorge is sung by Fernando Bañó Ferrando, a woolly voiced tenor who never seems to get his mouth open wide enough. The role lies very high (Lázaro was a natural for the part) so Fernando has a pretty rough time of it. The baritone and bass also suffer from "wooliness," a fact that leads one to suspect the recording is not all it should be—certainly it is no great shakes insofar as the orchestral sound is concerned.

This is all a genuine pity, for there is a lot of good music in *Marina*. The producers of the set supply a Spanish libretto but give no English translation—a rather silly procedure to follow when issuing the set in an English-speaking country. One other fact intrigued the writer—there are *three* conductors for the orchestra; he would love to know the reason for this one. W.

Falla: El Retablo de Maese Pedro ("Master Peter's Puppet Show"). Lola Rodriguez Aragon (soprano), Gaetano Renom (tenor), Manuel Ausensi (baritone), Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Eduardo Toldra. One side, and **Falla: El Amor Brujo**. Ana Maria Iriarte (mezzo-soprano) with l'Orchestre da la Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Ataulfo Argenta. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35089TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35089) \$5.95.

In one of the most tasteful and decorative albums yet issued by a company noted for its de luxe packaging, Angel Records brings out the third recording of *El Retablo de Maese Pedro* and the fifth of *El Amor Brujo*, both in versions to end all versions of these two works. Complete with texts, illustrations and comprehensive notes the set, at the price of \$5.95, is a real bargain.

The performance of *El Retablo de Maese Pedro* is a rousing one, excellent in every respect; and Maestro Toldra keeps control of his forces in a manner that adds musical value to Falla's score which, at best, is light weight. This music, as one can readily understand, was written with both eye and ear in mind and since the present experience is strictly an aural one, some loss of impact is inevitable. Nevertheless, the piece is enjoyable and, since it is well performed and recorded, it can be recommended for all partisans of Spanish music as well as those looking for something different.

El Amor Brujo is something else again and, while it too depends on stage trappings for part of its effect, the music is more powerful and makes its point with less difficulty than the puppet show. Another of the deep voiced Spanish contraltos has been recruited as vocalist and she makes all the music allotted to her very exciting indeed. A different, but equally good, conductor, Ataulfo Argenta, directs the performance and apparently has a wonderful time doing it and, consequently, so does the listener.

The recording is first class by any standards; and, for those interested in adding this music to their collections, the present disc may be considered the best buy. W.

Donizetti: L'Elisir d'Amore (complete). Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House conducted by Gabriele Santini. 2-12" discs (manual sequence only) (*HMV-ALP-1067/8) \$13.90.

Adina.....Margherita Carosio (s)
 Nemorino.....Nicola Monti (t)
 Belcore.....Tito Gobbi (bt)
 Dulcamara.....Melchiorre Luise (bs)
 Giannetta.....Loretta di Lelio (s)

This HMV *L'Elisir d'Amore* has great promise that, somehow, is not fulfilled. The performance is one of those difficult ones to classify. Nearly every-

thing is in order—the singing is more than adequate (in most instances) yet the point of the work seems to have been missed somewhere along the line.

Margherita Carosio is an ideal Adina, for in addition to possessing a lovely voice she is a student and something of a specialist in the music of Donizetti and Bellini. As a consequence her Adina emerges as a first rate characterization and is, of course, sung exquisitely. Now, unfortunately, there is more to *L'Elisir d'Amore* than the role of Adina, and here one begins to run into trouble. The usually reliable Gobbi disappoints as Belcore; not vocally of course, but dramatically. He seems wooden, a little too military, at times too bumptious; he lacks conviction. The tenor, Nicola Monti has a nice light voice, is a properly woebegone Nemorino, but here again the performance is two-dimensional. The chief offender against both good taste and Donizetti is Melchiorre Luise, who gives an incredibly hammy performance as Dr. Dulcamara. Really, one feels that the conductor, Gabriele Santini should have been able to put a stop to, or at least minimize, many of the sundry falsetto squeakings Melchiorre indulges in, presumably to add "comedy" to the proceedings. He should "give a listen" (as Milt Gross used to say) to the superb Dulcamara of Sesto Bruscantini in the Cetra set.

Incidentally, this other recording (TNR Jan. '53) still remains the best and probably will for some time to come. As for the present set, there are drastic cuts in the finale, so serious that the opera as recorded here seems to come to an end very suddenly.

It is never pleasant to have to turn thumbs down on a set of discs that obviously represent much time, labor and money; but under the circumstances one can do nothing else. There is no libretto. The sound is good, but well below the standards set by other English recordings heard here recently. W.

Operatic Arias. Nicolai Gedda (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35096TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35096) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Eugen Onegin*—Faint echo of my youth; *Werther*—Pourquoi me réveiller?; *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*—Je crois entendre encore; *Manon*—Instant charmant (recit.), En fermant les yeux (aria); *La Muette de Portici*—Du pauvre seul ami fidèle (Auber); *Roméo et Juliette*—L'amour! (recit.), Ah! lève-toi, soleil! (aria) (Gounod); *La Gioconda*—Cielo e mar!; *Rigoletto*—Ella mi fu rapita! (recit.), Parmi veder le lagrime (aria); *Martha*—Ach, so fromm; *L'Elisir d'Amore*—Una furtiva lagrima; *La Favorita*—Favorita del Re! (recit.), Spirto gentil (aria); *L'Arlesiana*—E la solita storia.

Nicolai Gedda, the young Swedish tenor, has essayed an ambitious program of familiar and relatively unfamiliar operatic arias, and the reviewer is confronted with two facts that must, willy nilly, be

taken into consideration in discussing the record: (1) much of the music has been recorded before by greater voices, and (2) to sing twelve different characters on one disc requires artistry of the highest order, an attribute possessed by few singers and fewer tenors. Now, since Gedda has literally "gone on record" with this program, his effort must be reviewed in light of the foregoing.

To begin with, the job, taken all in all, is a reasonably successful one. In such arias as the *Manon*, *Martha*, and *Pecheurs de Perles*, the essentially lyric qualities of his voice are very much in evidence, and the results are excellent. Difficulties, for this reviewer begin with the *Werther*, *Roméo et Juliette* and *Rigoletto* excerpts where he feels a larger voice is required to get both music and character across. The *Gioconda* and *Favorita* music just doesn't "come off"—it is too much for Gedda, although he makes a valiant effort. The remaining arias fall somewhere in limbo, being neither very good nor very poor.

The writer feels that any singer would be well advised to keep to a minimum of characterizations in an LP recital—certainly the fewer number of styles required, the better the chances of artistic success. And it would prove less of a strain on the listener too.

Angel's recording is excellent, Galliera's accompaniments tasteful and, of course, the package is first class. P.S. to Angel: How about a Giuseppe di Stephano recital, both operatic and song? W.

VOCAL



Recital of Russian Songs (Vol. I). Raphael Arié (bass) accompanied by Wilfred Parry (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9103) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Song of the Flea* (Moussorgsky); *Doubt* (Glinka); *The Seminarist* (Moussorgsky); *The Midnight Review* (Glinka); *She Laughed* (Lishin); *Death* (Gretchaninov).

Recital of Russian Songs (Vol. II). Raphael Arié (bass) with the London Symphony Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9101) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Song of the Volga Boatman* (arr. Koeneman) (with Wilfred Parry, piano); *When the King Went Forth to War* (Koeneman); *The Prophet* (Rimsky-Korsakov); *Fate, Op. 21, No. 1* (Rachmaninoff).

Raphael Arié, who labors under the ghost of the great Chaliapin, finally emerges, on these two discs, as a first class artist in his own right. His material has all been recorded before (many of them were Chaliapin's specialties); yet he is able to infuse a new element, a bit of his own personality, in a manner that bespeaks well both for his ingenuity and his artistry.

The most famous song (and consequently the most difficult to breathe new life into) is the much recorded *Song of the Flea*; and Arié succeeds in being at once devilish, humorous and musical. The other songs on

this first record are almost equally famous, and each is graced with original interpretive touches that add considerably to the listener's enjoyment. The second volume is every bit as fine and has a stirring performance of Koeneman's *When the King Went Forth to War* that features a fine orchestral accompaniment. The orchestra is also used in *The Volga Boatman* and Rimsky's *The Prophet*.

Raphael Arié sounds better on these two records than on any previous ones the writer has heard. His voice is rich, full and always colorful—a real bass. The phrasing is musically and always appropriate. Recording is good, and better than average notes are supplied. Both discs can be warmly recommended.

W.



MISCELLANEOUS

L'Anthologie Sonore (Vol. 1: Gregorian Chant to the 16th Century). Soloists and ensembles including the Pro Musica Antiqua Society (Brussels), Les Paraphonistes de St.-Jean des Matines and the Netherlands Vocal Quartet. 5-12" discs in box (*AS-A) \$30.40.

CONTENTS: Gregorian Chant to the 13th Century. (*AS-1) \$5.95.

The 13th & 14th Centuries. (*AS-2) \$5.95.

The 14th & 15th Centuries: Machault and Dufay. (*AS-3) \$5.95.

The 15th Century. (*AS-4) \$5.95.

Josquin des Pres and other composers of the late 15th & early 17th Centuries. (*AS-5) \$5.95.

The Italian Madrigal at the End of the Renaissance (L'Anthologie Sonore, Vol. 2, Record 3). "Luca Marenzio" Ensemble directed by Franco Maria Saraceni. 1-12" disc (*AS-8) \$5.95.

The Flute at the Courts of Frederick II and Louis XV (L'Anthologie Sonore, Vol. 4, Record 4). Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute) and Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AS-19) \$5.95.

The Baroque Concerto (L'Anthologie Sonore, Vol. 7, Record 1). Jean Fournier (violin), Ruggero Gerlin and Marcelle Charbonnier (harpsichords). 1-12" disc (*AS-31) \$5.95.

Mozart Orchestral Music (L'Anthologie Sonore, Vol. 7, Record 3). Members of the Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. 1-12" disc (*AS-33) \$5.95.

Mozart Motets (L'Anthologie Sonore, Vol. 7, Record 4). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of L'Anthologie Sonore, with Maurice Duruflé (organ). 1-12" disc (*AS-34) \$5.95.

Several pages could be written about the beautiful sounds which emanate from these discs; in fact, we necessarily omitted listing the titles to be found on

each disc because of lack of space. It will have to suffice, however, to say that the Haydn Society has secured the rights to L'Anthologie Sonore catalog, and is commencing to re-issue these discs, formerly available only on 78 rpm records in limited quantities, on LP records available to all. Certainly there has been renewed interest in ancient music (witness the RCA Victor series of "History of Music in Sound" and Haydn Society's own "Masterpieces of Music before 1750," TNR Feb. '54). Commendable as these issues are, we do not see how they can be a commercial success; for few except the most erudite scholars would know enough even to ask for such items.

The Haydn Society has prepared a little brochure describing the whole series (of 34 records); the list in the headings above comprises all that are presently available. If your local dealer cannot supply it, a copy of "L'Anthologie Sonore Catalog" may be obtained from the publisher of this bulletin without charge.

ORGAN

Music for the Organ. Ernest White, playing the Möller Organ in the Studio of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, New York City. 1-12" disc (*MOLLER LP-1) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Pavanne* (Elmore); *Partita in C minor* ("O Gott du frommer Gott") (Bach); *Aria con variazione* (Martini); *Flute Solo* (Arne); *Adagio* (Fiocco); *Legend of the Mountain* (Karg-Elert).

Lovers of fine organ music, to say nothing of fans of the organ world, have a rare treat in store for them when they hear this record. Ernest White is one of the great thinkers in the realm of organ music today, as well as a performer of the first magnitude. His ideas of tonal design in an organ and his application of these principles in his registration never fails to please us and fire the imagination. Mr. White has had several organs in the past decade or so at his studio in the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, New York City. The latest one was recently installed and is a product of M. P. Möller, Hagerstown, Md.; the stop-list appears on the jacket of the disc, and a fine picture of the console and part of the organ are shown on the cover. Those who are familiar with organ stop-lists will find this one rather unusual. It is capable of all the baroque effects you ever heard, and it is also capable of playing romantic music with appropriate warmth and dignity. It is a brilliant example of what Mr. White terms a true American Organ—a synthesis of old and new that allows the presentation of all styles of music with the required tonal balance.

A jacket note states "this record has a frequency range of 16 cps to 30 kc and a dynamic range of 40 DB. This range of sound will necessitate the use of the most compliant pickup available and a wide range amplification system to fully realize the contents." A symbol at the bottom of the jacket says "a product of b. & c. recording" with a New York address. Who-

ever is responsible for this disc has achieved a clarity and range of reproduction of the pipe organ the likes of which we have never before encountered on discs. This record is absolutely in a class by itself, and is the greatest thing we have ever heard. It is studio recording, and has no resonance; you are right in the organ as it is played. You can hear action noises during stop changes; and if a fly had sneezed, that would probably be in the disc too. The surfaces of the discs are remarkably quiet and hiss-free. Further discussion is useless; you must hear this disc to believe it. Needless to say, Ernest White's performances are sterling in concept, brilliant in execution and imaginative in registration. S.

Organ Reveries. Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGME-3120) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Valse Triste* (Sibelius); *The Sunken Cathedral* (Debussy); *Nocturne* (Grieg); *Lotus Land* (Scott); *Angelus* (Massenet); *Peer Gynt—Morning Mood* (Grieg).

Strauss Waltzes. Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGME-3110) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Emperor Waltz*; *Wine, Women and Song*; *Tales from the Vienna Woods*; *Blue Danube Waltz*.

One has the impression that MGM has reversed the old maxim and sent a man on a boy's errand. If, as we learn from the jacket notes, the 26-year old Ellsasser is the youngest person in history to have memorized and performed all 250 of Bach's organ works, then surely the present works are beneath him.

Which is not to say they are not competently performed. If you are looking for some light music you've probably never heard played on an organ before, these discs are certain to please.

Bach Organ Music. Jeanne Demessieux, playing the organ of the Victoria Hall (Geneva). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-946) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C*; (3) *Chorale-Preludes* ("Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein," "Jesus Christus, unser Heiland" and "Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland"); *Fugue in G* ("Fugue a la gigue"); *Prelude and Fugue in A minor*.

Jeanne Demessieux is one of the most brilliant stars in the world of organ virtuosi. She has been acclaimed wherever she has appeared and is truly a remarkable performer, reflecting her five years study with Marcel Dupré covering the entire organ literature. Her first American tour in 1953 won unstinted critical acclaim. She has made records for London since 1948; this one we believe to be the finest yet produced. As a Bach recital, it naturally presents thrice-familiar fare; but it is a well-varied and representative collection, including some of the master's choicest works.

Mlle. Demessieux plays each of these works with consummate artistry. *Nun komm' der Heiden Heiland*

(Come, Redeemer) is played with a lofty beauty and tenderness and with good delineation of the accompaniment. The setting used is the first of the three which Bach wrote—the most beautiful of the three. The little *Gigue Fugue* is played without ostentation, a good honest reading of the music. Much the same could be said for the *Prelude and Fugue in A minor*, well known in the Liszt piano version but far better heard when played as written for the organ. The *Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C* is the long work of this collection which occupies nearly all the first side. The quiet, cantabile *Adagio* is familiar to most folks, for it is often played alone; but the three parts of the work should be heard together to get the full effect of each one and of all of them. Mlle. Demessieux's rendition shows her technique to be virtually flawless and her control and steadiness most exceptional. There is much of the precise Dupré style in this performance.

The organ of Victoria Hall, Geneva, is a typical continental organ with singing mixtures and pungent reeds and a big, solid foundational tone. There is just a trace of resonance in the recording, giving a warm and satisfying effect. This is a fine record from every standpoint, deserving high praise for performance and reproduction.

S.



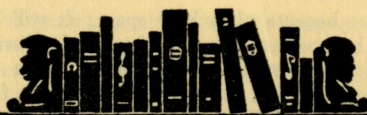
DICTION

Pardon My Bopper! (Vol. 2). Fluffs, Spoonerisms, Slips, Flubs and Bloopers from Radio and TV collected by Kermit Schafer. 1-10" disc (*JUBILEE LP-3) \$4.

Last April we reviewed Volume I in this series, and we were certain it would be only a matter of time before Volume II appeared, judging by the success of the earlier effort. These bloopers are, to us, excruciatingly funny; we have a lot of fun playing our copies of the two volumes for our friends. It is only fair to say, however, that they leave some persons cold.

As with Volume I, we suspect that many of the bloopers on the present disc are not the actual performances but are re-enactments created especially for the disc; this does not, however, take away from their authenticity—they purportedly actually did happen, according to Mr. Schafer, the editor of the series. Some are undoubtedly "air takes," however, like this one: "... and that is why we are proud that our company is the largest producer in the United States of aleeminum, magnusium, and stool." And, as also with Volume I, some of the bloopers require considerable broadmindedness.

Those who liked the former volume will like this one, too; it is just as good, if not better. There is noticeable surface hiss.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
(.) indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PAGE 16

The New Records

Berlioz
(Chorus)

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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RECORDS ARE being issued thick and fast, these days, and once again we find our desk piled high with new releases; the major companies are certainly going all out for the record buyer's dollar, and the independents are improving their quality and selection as a result. "High Fidelity" is becoming the usual thing, rather than something new, and the competition will result in good for the collector, even though he may feel that he'll never keep up with all the new discs. We will be keeping our editorial matter short the next few months in order to devote more space to reviews.

One little novelty came to our attention this month: a 12-inch disc issued by RCA Victor entitled *Hearing Is Believing*, issued to demonstrate the difference between older recordings and Victor's "New Orthophonic" high fidelity techniques; it proves only that newer discs are better, which proof is quite unnecessary. For example, the opening bars of Whiteman's old *Rhapsody in Blue* is played (with Gershwin on the piano) followed by the new recording of the same piece by Byron Janis (piano) with Hugo Winterhalter's Orchestra. There is no comparison, fidelity-wise, of course. There are five other similar examples on side 1; side 2 is devoted to nine selections illustrating only the "New Orthophonic" techniques, ranging from classical through mood music to pop tunes, played by Victor's best artists.

You'll have a lot of fun with this disc, and at the low price of \$1 it is one that should enjoy a wide sale, if only for the fact that it is a lot of music for a dollar. Copies may, of course, be ordered from the publisher of this bulletin. 1-12" disc (*V-SRL-12-1) \$1.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of

the issues published during the last twenty-two years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning October 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Gounod: *Faust*—Ballet Music. And Verdi: *Aida*—Prelude and Ballet Music. One side, and Verdi: (5) *Overtures*. Metropolitan Opera Orchestra—Cleva. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4886) \$5.95. (TNR July '52 & May '53).

Massenet: *Werther* (highlights). (Sung in French). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Theatre National de l'Opera-Comique de Paris—Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7124) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '53).

ORCHESTRA

Berlioz: *The Damnation of Faust*, Op. 24. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch, with Suzanne Danco (soprano), David Poleri (tenor), Martial Singher (baritone), Donald Gramm (bass) and the Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society directed by G. Wallace Woodworth. 3-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6114) \$17.85.

This, the 150th anniversary year of Berlioz' birth (he was born on 11 December 1803) has seen the issuance of an unprecedented number of his major works—the *Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale*, *Lélio*, and *Roméo et Juliette* and new versions of such standbys as *Harold en Italie*, *Symphonie Fantastique* as well as *L'Enfance du Christ* and some of the overtures. Scheduled for release are the *Te Deum*, directed by Sir Thomas Beecham, a new recording of the *Requiem* by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Charles Münch and still another new version of the *Fantastic Symphony* (Dorati and the Minneapolis Orchestra). When all the commotion dies away, it is likely that one of the outstanding contributions will be this sterling performance and recording of the epochal *La Damnation de Faust*.



It is utterly hopeless to try and give the reader of these columns any idea of the grandeur, the musical imagination and philosophical inventiveness Berlioz unleashed on the score. Those interested are referred to the *Mémoires* and to Jacques Barzun's definitive *Berlioz and the Romantic Century*. It must suffice to say that the "star" of this performance, and rightly so, is the superb Boston Symphony Orchestra. So much of the music and its underlying aesthetics are contained in the orchestral parts that any recording that does not have adequate sound must be passed by. The recording in this set is virtually perfect. The soloists are good, Suzanne Danco being an ideal Marguerite, David Poleri a convincing and fine-voiced Faust, able Martial Singher, although vocally past his prime, sings a Mephisto that is all one could ask for from a dramatic and stylistic point of view. The chorus, trained to a razor edge, leaves nothing to be desired. Brooding over the entire production is Charles Münch, who conducts with an authority that stems from equal parts of knowledge, love and inspiration.

RCA Victor has packaged these three discs with taste and intelligence. John Burke's notes and the complete French text with a new English translation add immeasurably to the listener's understanding and enjoyment. The reader is strongly urged to hear these magnificent records; they are among the best releases musically, technically and artistically that the writer, even allowing for his natural bias towards Berlioz, has come across in a good twenty-eight years of record activities of one sort or another. W.

Toscanini Plays Your Favorites. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1834) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Egmont Overture*, Op. 84 (Beethoven); *Hungarian Dances Nos. 1, 17, 20, 21* (Brahms—trans. Dvorák); *Roman Carnival Overture*, Op. 9 (Berlioz); *Zampa—Overture* (Hérold); *La Gioconda—Dance of the Hours* (Ponchielli); *Finlandia*, Op. 26, No. 7 (Sibelius).

Do you recall that wonderful cartoon by H. T. Webster showing the Timid Soul looking at a sign that said "Keep off the Grass! This Means YOU." Mr. Milquetoast remarks, "My goodness! How did they know I was here?" Well, Mr. RCA Victor, how did you know these were our favorites?

However, in most cases we wish someone else besides Toscanini were performing these pets of ours; he races through them (note, for example, Hérold's *Zampa Overture*) as though he had to catch a train.

Offenbach: La belle Hélène—Overture. One side, and **Offenbach: Orphée aux Enfers—Overture.** Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4095) \$2.50.

These little discs in the Decca DL-4000 series are certainly good buys at \$2.50. Here are a couple of the most popular Offenbach overtures performed to perfection by Mr. Wallenstein and the excellent Los Angeles Philharmonic.

The Ballet. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler; Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra; NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini; Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux; Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6113) \$19.95.

CONTENTS: Meyerbeer: *Les Patineurs* (Fiedler); Piston: *The Incredible Flutist Suite* (Fiedler); Stravinsky: *The Firebird Suite* (Stokowski); Ravel: *Daphnis and Chloé Suite No. 2* (Toscanini); Weber: *Invitation to the Dance* (Toscanini); Delibes: *Sylvia* (Monteux); Delibes: *Coppélia* (Monteux); Ravel: *La Valse* (Münch); Roussel: *Bacchus et Ariane Suite No. 2* (Münch).

It would seem that many record manufacturers are convinced that an elaborate package will help to sell classical records, even if it means a slight increase in price; and their thinking is logical: a classical disc or album is a more or less permanent addition to a man's library—one that he will not likely tire of quickly—and he will appreciate fine bindings, extra notes, photographs, etc.

If this be true, then here is an album which such a collector will want; for, besides most elaborate notes, beautiful photographs and a finely bound album, he will find some of the most delightful ballet music extant, performed in superb fashion, and reproduced in RCA Victor's very best hi fi. One is particularly impressed with Robert Lawrence's essay, "Some Words on Listening;" this is an apology, explaining why it is almost as good just to listen to ballet music as it is to both see and hear it on the stage. We have always felt this way, but Mr. Lawrence puts it in just the right words.

It might be well, here, to say a word about "Gruve-Gard," a process which RCA Victor is advertising rather heavily. It is an extension of the principle first introduced on 45's: making the label part of the disc thicker than the rest, so that the delicate grooves will not touch adjacent discs when stacked. Of course, with 7-inch discs it was sufficient just to make the labels thicker; but on LP's, with their greater diameter, RCA makes the outer edge thicker, too. This, they say, will prevent scraping of the grooves in removing the disc from the sleeve or jacket; actually, unless care is used, this is not the case, and a disc with "Gruve-Gard" can be scratched, especially if the sleeve is old and the open edges are warped or frayed slightly. If one "bellies" the sleeve (by holding the bottom against his waist and pressing on the top with his hand), any LP disc can be removed without scraping. "Gruve-Gard" will prevent the grooves of discs which are stacked on a changer from rubbing the grooves on an adjacent disc, however, so this process does have that advantage.

What with "Gruve-Gard," informative notes, beautiful packaging and music that is easy to enjoy, here is an album of ballet music for everyone. J.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("The Great"). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc in album (*V-LM-1835) \$6.95.

Schumann: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 97 ("Rhenish"). One side, and **Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120.** Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Dean Dixon. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5285) \$5.95.

The number of hi-fi recordings of Schubert's *Great C major Symphony* are rather few, and the number of LP's of any merit is none too large, considering the masterpiece which the work is. Of the newer recordings we have had kind words to say in these columns about Krips (*L-LL-619) and Furtwängler (*D-DX-119); and while we have liked Bruno Walter's reading, it is now aging a bit, reproduction-wise. For those who want a spacious reading of this work, well controlled but on the really grand scale, nothing beats Furtwängler. For those who want it on a single LP disc, Krips is still the best available, for he has a compassion and human kindness which shows right through the fabric of this score; Krips' Viennese touch joins hands with Schubert, a man simple and humble and gentle. This great symphony is a towering rock, but it is still a product of the melodist Schubert, and the iron hand does it no good. Krips is aided by the Concertgebouw Orchestra, a vastly superior orchestra to the NBC, both tonally and as an ensemble too. A side by side comparison of the Krips and Toscanini versions leaves us no choice but to recommend Krips, an opinion which will be roundly condemned by many persons. For those who prefer Toscanini, they will find his reading crisp and brisk, and the second movement at the uniquely fast tempo which he prefers. The reproduction is good, but no paragon among today's best. Victor has supplied an album similar in make-up to the one used for *The Pines of Rome* album, very beautifully contrived, with a fine treatise on Schubert by André Maurois.

The Schumann *Fourth* has appeared frequently of late on LP, including a notably good version by Krips (*L-LL-930) coupled with the Mendelssohn *Italian Symphony*. Monteux and Szell also have good ones. The present disc however, has as a coupling the only hi-fi version of the lovely *Rhenish Symphony*. The *Rhenish* can, therefore, be recommended as the best available; the *Fourth* can be recommended as a fine reading, and the matter of coupling is for you to decide. Westminster has achieved excellent reproduction, rich and well balanced. S.

Saint-Saëns: Le Carnaval des Animaux. One side, and **Ibert: Divertissement.** Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8270) \$5.95.

Two light modern works served up on a "Full Dimensional Sound" platter for the edification both of hi-fi fans and those who like modern music that is not dissonant.

Moussorgsky—arr. Ravel: Pictures at an Exhibition. One and one-half sides, and **Franck: Psyche—Psyche and Eros.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1838) \$5.95.

Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition. Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-10" disc in box, with illustrated brochure (*CL-LAL-8266) \$4.94.

That *Pictures at an Exhibition* is really great music and a masterpiece of composition is attested to by the fact that it is equally as great in either solo piano or orchestral version. The solo piano has no difficulty in painting the pictures; but there is hardly any denying among unbiased folks that the orchestra can do a better job. Orchestral instruments have a better imitative quality for the unhatched chicks, an orchestra does not have to break chords for a massive effect, an orchestra can generate power without tremolando effects, and—the bane of piano players—an orchestra can sustain a tone with undiminished power indefinitely. For pianists, piano students, and avid lovers of the instrument, this work played on the piano may be desirable; but for those who want the best listening experience which this music can provide, an orchestral version is indicated. And the composer of *A Night on Bald Mountain* would hardly argue the case any further.

Leonard Pennario puts forth a valiant effort, resulting in an admirable performance; Capitol has boxed this disc attractively and included a booklet annotated by Alfred Frankenstein, with reproductions of the Hartman pictures and pictures submitted by Cleveland artists some years ago at the request of Erich Leinsdorf. This is a beautiful job. Capitol's reproduction of the piano is very hi-fi.

In the July 1954 TNR we summarized the recordings to date of the orchestral versions of *Pictures*, with Ormandy, Kubelik, and Ansermet dividing honors for various reasons. That opinion is strictly unchanged as of this date, for Toscanini has a mechanical disjointed performance of thin orchestral tone. His tempi, for once, are not fast; in fact they are slower than Ormandy or Kubelik, but they have not the validity of Ansermet's slower tempi. We have heard Toscanini do this work much better in broadcast performances some years ago; this must have been an off day, for this disc cannot compare in any way with any of the three others mentioned. S.

Offenbach: Gaité Parisienne. One and one-half sides, and **Meyerbeer: Les Patineurs.** Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1817) \$5.95.

You are not going to get a better version of *Gaité Parisienne* than this rousing version by Arthur Fiedler and the ineluctible Boston Pops, so if you've been waiting for the best, wait no more. The Meyerbeer item was, no doubt, lifted from the RCA Victor album, *The Ballet* (*V-LM-6113), reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 20. One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9626) \$5.85.

Ferenc Fricsay has built up quite a following via his phonograph records, and with personal appearances in this country he might well become one of the favorite conductors on these shores within a decade. This record serves to show him as one of the younger conductors in the German tradition conducting works in the familiar repertoire, and he does no malice to these masterpieces. His conducting always has a nice spontaneity without resorting to distortions of the score at hand. We would not say he has any new ideas on these Beethoven works and can only say he observes the accepted manner of doing them. He is inclined to favor brisk tempi. Those who take their Beethoven very seriously will be inclined to compare before they buy, and they may well wind up with other versions. Those who already own No. 1, which has been used as a filler for larger Beethoven sets, including the *Ninth*, might consider the Beecham recording of No. 8 which is coupled with the Mendelssohn *Italian Symphony* (*C-ML-4681), a nice coupling of distinctive performances. And there are always the performances by Toscanini, Walter, Weingartner and others who are definitive depending on which camp you belong to. Which is to say that there are many recordings of Beethoven symphonies, and there is no particular reason why you should buy this disc by Fricsay, unless you are in his camp.

The reproduction is no paragon among today's discs, being a bit seedy in the string tone; but it has an over-all depth and richness which may please you, and it does have good clarity. The Berlin Philharmonic plays with style and precision. S.

Mr. Strauss Comes to Boston. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1809) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: 'S geibt nur ein' Kaiserstadt, Op. 291; Morgenblätter Waltz, Op. 279; Bouquet Quadrille, Op. 135; An der schönen blauen Donau, Op. 314; Bijouterie Quadrille, Op. 169; G'schichten aus dem Wiener Wald, Op. 325; Kreuz Fidel Polka, Op. 30; Freikugeln Polka, Op. 326; Jubilee Waltz; Pizzicato Polka.

The reason for the issuance of this record is that Johann Strauss came to Boston in 1872 for the International Musical Festival and Peace Jubilee (celebrating the end of the Franco-Prussian War), and in the course of his visit he conducted all of the pieces on this disc; in fact, the *Jubilee Waltz* was premiered during his stay.

Whether or not this knowledge helps you to appreciate this music more, there's no gainsaying that Mr. Fiedler and the Boston Pops play these ingratiating melodies in a manner beyond cavil.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky (TNR Aug. '37). One side, and **Koussevitzky Plays the Double-Bass.** Serge Koussevitzky (double-bass) accompanied by Pierre Luboschutz (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1145) \$5.95.

About the only reason we can think of for the editor's putting this disc under ORCHESTRA is to locate the review further forward in our little bulletin; otherwise it would have to go under MISCELLANEOUS at the very back of the issue; no doubt he wanted to be sure our readers would not miss this item. Surely Koussevitzky's fine but ancient recording of the *Romeo and Juliet Overture* isn't the feature here. It is, rather, the Maestro's showcase for the bass viol, or double-bass.

The story of how Koussevitzky came to take up the double-bass at the age of 14 is told in the interesting jacket notes by Olga Koussevitzky. That he was only the third known master of this most difficult of string instruments does not surprise us; there are none around today—none, at least, giving recitals. You have to hear this disc to believe Koussevitzky's technique; except for the register, you'd think he was playing a 'cello, with such facile does he bow his Amati.

There being almost no literature for the bass viol, Koussevitzky was forced to transcribe other works and/or compose pieces for himself. On this disc we hear the Andante movement from his *Concerto in F minor*, Op. 3; his *Valse Miniature*; his *Chanson Triste*, Op. 2; his transcription of Eccles' *Largo* (from "Cello Sonata"); Laska's *Wiegenlied*, Op. 28, No. 5; and Beethoven's *Minuet in G*.

We seem to recall that the Boston Symphony Orchestra issued a limited edition of these bass viol solos in the old 78 rpm days to raise money for the orchestra; now these examples of the extraordinary musicianship of Serge Koussevitzky are available to all. Reproduction is, of course, not up to today's standards. J.

Waltzes and Songs of Waldteufel and Léhar. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4893) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Estudiantina Waltz*, *Espana Waltz*, *Golden Rain Waltz*, *The Skaters Waltz* (Waldteufel); *Merry Widow Waltz*, *Yours Is My Heart Alone*, *Eva Waltzes*, *Vilia*, *Gold and Silver Waltz* (Léhar).

To be strictly correct, this disc should be entitled *Waltzes of Waldteufel and Lehar and Song by Léhar*; only one song graces this collection. However it is needless to point out that the glorious Philadelphia Orchestra under the sympathetic baton of Eugene Ormandy is right in its element in music of this type, and Columbia has seen fit to soup up the reproduction to the nth degree.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5 in D, Op. 47. St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8268) \$5.95.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 1 in F minor, Op. 10. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Pflüger. One side, and **Shostakovich: Symphony No. 9 in E-flat, Op. 70.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Rolf Kleinert. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7128) \$5.95.

Most popular of the Shostakovich symphonies, the No. 5, because of its somewhat romantic qualities, continues to exert the most appeal, and it is a stirring work which moves to a thrilling finale. Of its several LP recordings, the one outstanding one has been Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic (*C-ML-4739) which we reviewed in glowing terms last December. We have compared Mitropoulos and Golschmann and are at a loss to name a victor in this contest. Golschmann generates as much excitement as Mitropoulos, but he does it in a different way, usually with less pressure on the tempo. Golschmann has long been known as an expert on this particular symphony and has had great success wherever he conducted it, including a memorable concert at Robin Hood Dell which we missed but heard about from many friends. This performance shows a real feeling for the music which has come from long association with it. We can only admire Golschmann's reading and the exceptional playing of the St. Louis Orchestra, to say nothing of Capitol's reproduction, an example of the very best. However, it has not lessened our pleasure in the Mitropoulos disc which still thrills us with its boldness and drive; it, too, is a splendid reproduction.

The Shostakovich *First* and *Ninth* symphonies provide an ideal coupling, as is brought out in the notes by Mr. Canby on the jacket, notes which are absorbing and informative as well as interestingly presented. Both works are of the composer's shorter, better proportioned variety. They have much in common in style, even though they are his first and his latest symphonies. The *Ninth* is disarmingly simple in surface matters, being in five short movements, and not overblown in scoring. It is, however, a mature product, skillfully constructed, and a little gem compared to the two monstrosities that preceded it. This is a sort of post-war back-to-normal work after the bloated Nos. 7 & 8 of war vintage. The Leipzig and Berlin Radio Orchestras play these works with polish and are well reproduced. Each work is interpreted with authority and style; the coupling of the two makes this the most desirable disc of these works. S.

Kodaly: Peacock Variations. One side, and **Bartók: Suite from The Miraculous Mandarin.** Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50038) \$5.95.

Kodaly's *Peacock Variations* are here recorded for the first time; the Bartók *Miraculous Mandarin* receives its second recording. The *Peacock Variations*

takes its title from the Hungarian folk tune on which it is based—Fly, Peacock, Fly, a song whose words would seem to make the peacock a symbol of freedom from the political oppression which has been part of the Hungarian life for the greater part of three centuries. After presenting the theme in several guises in an introduction, Kodaly exploits its potentialities throughout a series of sixteen variations and Finale. The whole work is a masterpiece of scoring, with virtuoso passages for solo instruments, and an extraordinary variety of coloring and exotic effects—using only a normal classical orchestra with harps. We found this work completely enchanting as a piece of music and were fascinated by the individual episodes as well as by the cumulative effect as it progressed.

Bartók's *Miraculous Mandarin*, as here recorded, is the concert suite drawn from his ballet which has a lurid scenario that caused it to be banned from the stage many times between its composition in 1919 and its first performance at Cologne in 1925. It is music of teeming excitement, sensuous implications and many descriptive musical passages. If one stops and thinks about the music we have been handed in the past few years to accompany ballets depicting the seamy side of life—such as *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue* and others better and worse—and then hears the high level of musical composition which Bartók has contrived, his effort stands out even more vividly as quite a masterpiece.

During January of 1954, Antal Dorati appeared as guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, playing, among other numbers also recorded, these two works. It is a tribute to both the conductor and the orchestra that two such superbly wrought performances of neglected, though great, music are given such magnificent readings. And Mercury's reproduction is just incomparable. This is one of their very finest efforts which we could not imagine better done by anyone else. S.

R. Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1807) \$5.95.

R. Strauss: Also sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30. One and one-half sides, and **R. Strauss: Salome—Dance of the Seven Veils.** Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1806) \$5.95.

Two of the greatest hi-fi showpieces, Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* and *Also sprach Zarathustra*, serve to introduce RCA Victor's latest and greatest in high fidelity reproduction, featuring the venerable Chicago Symphony Orchestra under its new conductor, Fritz Reiner, on its new record label. Mercury set a high mark for anyone to follow with its superb recordings of this fine orchestra under its former conductor, Rafael Kubelik. RCA takes a couple of pages in its program notes to extol the virtues of high fidelity, and its approach to the problem. The results are indeed impressive, for RCA has succeeded as few others have in providing a bass response of great

volume and definition, on top of which they have laid a treble range of brilliance and power, without the two seeming to interfere with each other. The treble has requisite sweetness, if you tone-control your set properly, for this version of high fidelity reproduction requires careful adjustment of your set; otherwise the treble is out of proportion. This is, to our ears, a rather different type of reproduction; after comparing it with Mercury and with London (in the *Ein Heldenleben*), we found it impressive and pleasing—if the tone controls were properly adjusted. Our set has a compensation switch, and by using the A.E.S. position with the treble cut a bit and the bass boosted, the results were fine (this is recommended on the jacket notes).

Fritz Reiner is known as an able interpreter of the music of Richard Strauss, and he demonstrates a conducting skill that is exceptional, even in this day, in both of the works at hand. Clemens Krauss was also considered one of the foremost conductors of Strauss, and his London discs of both these works are by no means inferior to the present discs—there may be many who will prefer his slightly less calculated approach—and London's reproduction of the *Ein Heldenleben* (*L-LL-659) is definitely in the realm of hi-fi. We cannot help admiring Antal Dorati's reading of *Ein Heldenleben* as well as Mercury's magnificent reproduction of it (*ME-MG-50012), and find it, if anything, more thrilling than either of the others. Victor supplies beautiful folders for these discs, and the surfaces are like satin. The *Also sprach Zarathustra* is the best version of the available LP's. S.

Vaughan Williams: Job ("A Masque for Dancing").

London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1003) \$5.95.

It was the late Blake scholar, Dr. Geoffrey Keynes, who first discerned the dramatic pattern in Blake's illustrations to the Book of Job and interested Vaughan Williams in its musical potentialities. The ballet itself was created by Ninette de Valois for the Camargo Society in 1930. *Job* is not so much an interpretation of the Book of Job as an animation of Blake's illustrations. It is one of the least decorative ballets in existence—as a composite art work it is profoundly ethical and philosophical. Technically the score of *Job* may be regarded as a compendium of Vaughan Williams' style—a synthesis in which all the varying aspects of his mind are combined in a single transcendent work. All of these remarks are drawn from the jacket notes to give you a general idea of what this music is all about.

There are nine scenes, or sections, to the music and a brief description of each is on the jacket to further aid your mind's eye in picturing what the music is supposed to describe. If there is not much decoration in the ballet, neither is there an abundance of motion and rhythm in the music; yet there is a wealth of orchestral color, and many styles of musical thought—all of them hallmarked with

Vaughan Williams' individuality. The orchestra used in the scoring is not stated in the notes, but it must be a huge one—everything from saxophones to pipe organ, and various percussions. Generally speaking, the scoring is light, the full resources of the orchestra being employed sparingly. This is music one must hear a few times, become acquainted with, and be in tune with, or it merely seems diffuse and pointless. Familiarity begins to show the depth of the score and the thinking behind it.

For its first LP recording, *Job* has the benefit of the veteran British conductor Sir Adrian Boult, who by temperament would seem to be an ideal man for this work. He produces what sounds to us like a reading of solid merit and honest values, no doubt with the composer's blessings. It has been recorded with exceptional richness by London. S.

Grieg: Lyric Suite, Op. 54. Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erik Tuxen. One side, and **Reesen: Himmerland** ("A Danish Rhapsody"). Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Emil Reesen. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-849) \$4.95.

Wirén: Serenade for Strings, Op. 11. One side, and **Larsson: Pastorale Suite, Op. 19.** Stockholm Radio Orchestra conducted by Stig Westerberg. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-714) \$4.95.

Svendsen: Festival Polonaise, Op. 12. One side, and **Svendsen: Norwegian Artists' Carnival, Op. 16.** Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erik Tuxen. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9123) \$2.95.

With the exception of Grieg and Svendsen, all of the composers above are represented on LP for the first time by means of these discs. And all of the works are LP firsts.

Grieg's *Lyric Suite, Op. 54* is Grieg's revision of Anton Seidl's arrangement of Grieg's *Lyric Pieces*, written originally for the piano. It is in four sections: Shepherd Boy; Norwegian Rustic March; Nocturne; March of the Dwarfs. One is impressed with its delightful melodies . . . Reesen's *Himmerland* dates from 1926 and is named after a province in Northern Jutland. The composer has painted a musical picture of the beautiful Danish landscape, using authentic traditional melodies of the province . . . Dag Wirén's best known work is the *Serenade for Strings, Op. 11*; it dates from 1937 and is a work of irresistible charm, very easy to listen to and performed here with ebullience . . . Lars-Erik Larsson, we are told, is very well known in Sweden; we may presume that the *Pastoral Suite, Op. 19* is typical of his work, for it is at once tuneful, sparkling and easily assimilated. . . . The two Svendsen works date from 1872/77 while he was conductor of the Christiana Musical Association, founded by Grieg. They are nationalistic in character, sprightly and melodious.

London's *frr* reproduction is very much in evidence in all three of these discs.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385** ("Haffner"). London Mozart Players conducted by Harry Blech. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1069) \$2.98.

Mozart: (6) Minuets, K. 599. And **Mozart: (4) Minuets, K. 601.** And **Mozart: (2) Minuets, K. 604.** One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525** ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). Hewitt Orchestra conducted by Maurice Hewitt. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-101) \$5.95.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 15 in B-flat, K. 287. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska, with Jan Tomasow (violin). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-444) \$5.95.

There are some fourteen major versions of the Mozart *Fortieth* and an even dozen of the "Haffner," all of which cost more than the RCA Victor Bluebird version listed above; yet the performances of Harry Blech (of whom we've never heard) and the reproduction accorded him (no doubt by HMV) is as good as you'll find on any of the others.

In our June 1954 issue "S" reviewed a Haydn Society recording of Schubert's "Unfinished" and "Tragic" Symphonies (*HS-HSL-89), and his criticism was that "some of the warp and woof shows through where we would prefer to see (hear) just the picture." The same criticism might be made of the present *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*; the Minuets can stand this revealing treatment, but we like our *Eine kleine* a little more lush.

Nothing but praise for Prohaska's treatment of the lovely *Divertimento No. 15*, here presented in its only LP recording to date. This one will be hard to better, and reproduction is extremely close-to and brilliant.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8272) \$5.95.

About two years ago we wrote a review of the *Pathétique* played by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (*C-ML-4544) which accorded it exceptionally high praise, both as a performance and as a reproduction. Looking over the LP lists at this time, it must be admitted that the Ormandy disc has no peer and has stood unchallenged. A recent study by another publication of all the recorded works of Tchaikovsky gave this disc the highest praise of any Tchaikovsky recording, and placed it way above other discs of the *Pathétique*.

The new Steinberg-Pittsburgh recording is indeed a challenging version and there may be those who will prefer it to Ormandy. Steinberg's interpretation is a thorough and searching one, well balanced and not bizarre, except that he achieves some strange effects in the third movement by changing balances or bringing out inner parts a few times. The third movement otherwise is played at an admirable tempo, rather more measured than usual, slower than Ormandy, but with a fine drive and attention to detail. The tone

of the Pittsburgh Orchestra in this romantic warhorse is beautiful, if not quite as lush as the Philadelphians. All through the work Steinberg's well known musicianship is in evidence. None of the LP's recorded in Europe is any match for this disc, and of those recorded in this country only Ormandy's is comparable.

Capitol has improved its reproduction with the new discs being issued this Fall. Those who admired last year's "Full Dimensional Sound" discs will find the same fullness and balance, with an even greater range and clarity. This disc is a fine example of the best of American high fidelity reproduction. Whether you prefer the *Pathétique* by Ormandy or Steinberg is something your ears and your heart will have to tell you; they are both winners in our books. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished"). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet** (Overture-Fantasia). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50037) \$5.95.

Our readers know of our already much-professed admiration for Dorati and the Chicago Orchestra, and they are well aware that we have always praised Mercury's super clear reproduction. Therefore, in spite of the fact that this disc represents the umpteenth recording of each work, we have nothing but kudos for it; it is great on all counts.

Toscanini Conducts Wagner. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6020) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: *Tristan und Isolde*—Prelude & Liebestod; *Die Götterdämmerung*—Prologue, Siegfried's Rhine Journey, Siegfried's Funeral Music; *Die Meistersinger*—Prelude (Act I), Prelude (Act III); *Siegfried Idyll*; *Lohengrin*—Prelude (Act I), Prelude (Act III); *Parsifal*—Prelude & Good Friday Music.

The notes for this set are taken from Lawrence Gilman's *Toscanini and Great Music*, wherein Mr. Gilman explains how Toscanini "restores" Wagner's music, meaning that the Maestro plays Wagner exactly as it was written. Mr. Gilman infers that other conductors distort Wagner by adding their own mannerisms. Wagner is supposed to have said that fine performances of his music would be forbidden, that nothing but indifferent performances could save him. "But we are helpless," Mr. Gilman goes on, "when it is such an interpreter as Toscanini who applies himself to the . . . pages (of Wagner). . . . There is nothing, then, to intervene between the impact of Wagner's genius at its most unbearable and the sensibilities of the responsive. . . ."

Well, those words were written in 1938, and this set was recorded, no doubt, early this year. We listened. We were impressed. We admired Signor Toscanini—were thrilled, we might add. We kept waiting for the music to become unbearable. It didn't. Did the impact of Wagner's genius go over our heads?

Or are we unresponsive? Or (nay! nay!) has Toscanini mellowed in sixteen years and decided, at long last, to intervene (nay! nay!) to save our sensibilities?

If you have always loved Wagner's music, as we do, you will want this album; it is marvelous! Pay no attention to the prophets of doom who may lead you to believe you need three heads to appreciate it. And if you'd like to hear some great and thrilling reproduction, here it is.

French Music for the Theater. Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50035) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (Dukas); *Pelléas and Mélisande*, Op. 80—Incidental Music (Fauré); *The Spider's Feast*, Op. 17 (Roussel).

Starlight Concert. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8276) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Clair de Lune* (Debussy); *Pomp and Circumstance* (Elgar); *Hungarian Dance No. 5* (Brahms); *Invitation to the Dance* (Weber); *None but the Lonely Heart* (Tchaikovsky); *Flight of the Bumblebee* (Rimsky-Korsakov); *Valse Triste* (Sibelius); *Finlandia* (Sibelius).

Ravel: Daphnis et Chloé Suite No. 2. And Ravel: *Rapsodie espagnole*. One side, and R. Strauss: *Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche*, Op. 28. And R. Strauss: *Salome*, Op. 54—*Salome's Dance*. And R. Strauss: *Der Rosenkavalier*—Waltzes. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4884) \$5.95.

Showpieces for Orchestra (Vol. 2). Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9728) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Marche Joyeuse*, *Habañera*, *España Rapsodie* (Chabrier); *The Bartered Bride*—Overture, Polka, Furiant, Dance of the Comedians (Smetana); *The Damnation of Faust*—Hungarian March, Minuet of the Will-o'-the-Wisps, Dance of the Sylphs (Berlioz); *Habañera* (Chabrier); *The Moldau* (Smetana).

Tchaikovsky: Marche Slav, Op. 31. And Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet* (Overture-Fantasia). One side, and Tchaikovsky: *Ouverture Solennelle "1812,"* Op. 49. And Tchaikovsky: *Capriccio Italien*, Op. 45. Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Jonel Perlea. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8700) \$5.95.

Echoes of Spain. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8275) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *El Amor Brujo*—Ritual Fire Dance (Fallá); *Estrellita* (Ponce); *Jalousie* (Gade); *España* (Chabrier); *Malagueña* (Lecuona); *Andalucía* (Lecuona); *El Relicario* (Padilla); *Goyescas*—Intermezzo (Granados).

Having listened to this potpourri of dazzling or-

chestral music, we have come to the conclusion that it is unnecessary for us to comment on the fidelity of most new releases. Practically every company, now, is concentrating its best efforts in producing LP discs featuring the best in high fidelity which should more than please the audiophiles; even the Decca disc, *Showpieces for Orchestra*, seems to have a very wide range and excellent balance. We shall, therefore, make mention of the reproduction only if it is below what we expect or if it is something extraordinarily fine, above most present-day standards.

All of the music above is well known; the performances are in every way satisfactory.

CONCERTO



Chopin: Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1810) \$5.95.

It seems we just got through saying the Chopin *Concerto No. 1* had not been treated to too many really good phonographic versions, and having reviewed favorably the Horszowski disc, we proclaimed the newer version by Gulda and Boult as the best all-around LP of the work—the best in the catalogs. And now, one month later, the story is a different one. Artur Rubinstein, a great virtuoso of the piano, is acknowledged as an unsurpassed interpreter of Chopin, his performances being admired universally. With the able and perceptive support of Alfred Wallenstein and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, we have a reading of the Chopin *First Concerto* which is indeed a beauty.

Having as a model in concerto writing Hummel, Ries, Kalkbrenner, and Gyrowetz, Chopin confined the function of the orchestra to that of an accompaniment. He emancipated the piano, and offered the pianist a maximum opportunity for display of virtuosity. Successive generations have sought to "correct" the orchestration of this concerto, but it is now considered best to play it as written, as published in 1833, which is how it is played in this recording. Rubinstein seems to convey as much of a message from this score as anyone we have ever heard, and he does it with a style that is the epitome of Chopinesque playing; Wallenstein lends all possible strength orchestral, without overdoing it. The recording was made on the sound stage of Republic Pictures in Hollywood, Cal. in December 1953. One microphone for orchestra and one for piano were used, and the balance between them is something at which to marvel; it is virtually perfect. The quality of tone is most realistic, no easy matter where pianos are concerned. This is a splendidly performed and recorded disc, which bears our highest recommendation. S.

Telemann: Concerto in G for Viola and Orchestra. Heinz Kurchner (viola) with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. One side, and **Gabrieli: (2) Canzone for Double String Orchestra.** Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-686) \$4.95.

A Bouquet of Vivaldi Concerti. Soloists with the Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-538) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Concerto in G minor* (J. Tomasow, violin); *Concerto in A minor* (J. Tomasow, violin); *Concerto Grosso in D minor, Op. 3, No. 11* ("L'estro armonico"); *Concerto, Op. 10, No. 3* ("The Bullfinch") (L. Pfersmann, flute).

Bach: Concerto in G minor. Joseph Szigeti (violin) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. And **Handel: Sonata No. 4 in D.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Carlo Bussotti (piano). One side, and **Tartini: Concerto in D minor.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. And **Tartini: Sonata in G.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Carlo Bussotti (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4891) \$5.95.

Pergolesi: (4) Concertinos for String Orchestra. Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Angelo Ephrikian. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5295) \$5.95. (TNR Sept. '51).

CONTENTS: *Concertinos Nos. 1 in G, 3 in A, 4 in F minor, and 5 in E-flat.*

We just love old music of this nature; we could listen to such beautiful melodies all day. But it is difficult to "review;" we doubt whether anything we could say would either sell the discs to one who doesn't care for this sort of thing, nor keep those interested from buying them. Our favorite of the four discs above is the re-issue of the four Pergolesi Concertinos (sometimes called Concertos) for String Orchestra (*WEST-WL-5295), formerly on 2-10" discs and reviewed in TNR Sept. '51.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. Nathan Milstein (violin) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8271) \$5.95.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 3 in B minor, Op. 61. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Gaston Poulet. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Sonata in F.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) and Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1071) \$5.95.

In the August issue of TNR we heaped lavish praise on the Olevsky reading of this venerable masterwork and stated it as our first choice among all LP versions. But the LP world is a fast moving one which can keep record reviewers in a continual state of changing their minds. No one could listen to this recording of

the Brahms *Concerto* by Milstein without being deeply impressed. It seems to us that Milstein has never sounded to better advantage on records than in this recording. There is a freshness and spontaneity to his playing which seem unusual and contribute to the effectiveness of the performance. He is accorded an accompaniment nothing short of magnificent by Steinberg and the Pittsburgh Orchestra. And to top it all off with a real flourish Capitol has clothed the performance with the best reproduction it has yet offered (at this writing we have not heard their several new orchestral records). This reproduction has the one thing missing from the Olevsky recording by Westminster: resonance, which adds a quality to the illusion that is very desirable—a quality demanded by many record collectors. We can offer nothing but praise for this marvelous disc, and give it our highest recommendation on all counts.

While there are a few other recordings of the Saint-Saëns *Concerto No. 3* in the LP lists, notably one by Francescatti, the present one by Menuhin is not the work of primary interest on this disc. The Mendelssohn *Sonata in F* is heard here for the first time, not only on discs, but probably in any manner for most of us, for it is an unpublished work; the original manuscript is the only source of the photostat copy which has come into Menuhin's possession. His program notes speak highly and affectionately of the music, and we must admit it is just as facile and appealing writing as any other of Mendelssohn's works. Menuhin gives it a reading charged with enthusiasm, and of course, technical polish. The same qualities of enthusiasm and urgency mark his playing of the Saint-Saëns concerto; both works are well reproduced, making this a fine disc. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Debussy: Quartet in G minor, Op. 10. One side, and **Milhaud: Quartet No. 12.** Quartetto Italiano. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35130TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35130) \$5.95.

The Quartetto Italiano, which Virgil Thomson has called "the finest string quartet, unquestionably, that our century has known," here plays two modern quartets: one comparatively well known, the other in its first LP performance. Mr. Thomson's comments to the contrary notwithstanding, the Quartetto Italiano has stiff competition on discs, in the Debussy, with the Budapest Quartet (*C-ML-4668); it is pretty much a matter of whether you prefer the Ravel *Quartet* or the present Milhaud opus on the other side.

Bach: Partita in E minor. And **Bach: Sonata in G minor.** One side, and **Bach: Sonata No. 3 in E.** Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4862) \$5.95.

Three Bach chamber works sympathetically played by Isaac Stern and Alexander Zakin.

Beethoven: (6) String Quartets, Op. 18. Vegh Quartet. 3-12" discs in box (*HS-HSQ-N) \$18.50.

CONTENTS: *Quartets Nos. 1 in F and 2 in G*. (*HS-HSQ-43) \$5.95.

Quartets Nos. 3 in D and 4 in C minor. (*HS-HSQ-44) \$5.95.

Quartets Nos. 5 in A and 6 in B-flat. (*HS-HSQ-45) \$5.95.

Beethoven: (5) String Quartets. Vegh Quartet. 3-12" discs in box (*HS-HSQ-O) \$18.50.

CONTENTS: *Quartet in F, Op. 59, No. 1* ("Rasoumovsky No. 1"). (*HS-HSQ-41) \$5.95.

Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2 ("Rasoumovsky No. 2") and *Quartet in F minor, Op. 95* ("Quartett Serioso"). (*HS-HSQ-42) \$5.95.

Quartet in C, Op. 59, No. 3 ("Rasoumovsky No. 3") and *Quartet in E-flat, Op. 74* ("The Harp"). (*HS-HSQ-40) \$5.95.

Beethoven: (6) String Quartets. Vegh Quartet. 4-12" discs in box (*HS-HSQ-P) \$24.45.

CONTENTS: *Quartets in E-flat, Op. 127 and in F, Op. 135*. (*HS-HSQ-46) \$5.95.

Quartet in B-flat, Op. 130. (*HS-HSQ-47) \$5.95.

Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131 and Grosse Fugue in B-flat, Op. 133. (*HS-HSQ-48) \$5.95.

Quartet in A minor, Op. 132. (*HS-HSQ-49) \$5.95.

In TNR November '52 we reviewed the Columbia issue of the Complete String Quartets of Beethoven, and we praised the effort highly. Now along comes Haydn Society and offers the same works performed by the highly competent Vegh Quartet. We have the Budapest versions in our library, and we rather feel that if price is no object most persons would prefer the Budapest, especially in view of their playing on the marvelous old Stradivarius instruments of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Foundation. However, it is only fair to point out that Haydn Society gets all of these great works on ten 12-inch discs (to Columbia's twelve) so there is a saving of nearly \$10, even if you purchase the Haydn Society sets in the boxes. And certainly it would be difficult to find fault with the consecrated playing of the Vegh Quartet.

Brahms: Trio in E-flat, Op. 40. Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano), Alexander Schneider (violin) and Mason Jones (French horn). One side, and **Schumann: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 47.** The New York Quartet: Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano), Alexander Schneider (violin), Milton Katims (viola) and Frank Miller (violinello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4892) \$5.95.

Brahms: Quintet in F minor, Op. 34. Hollywood String Quartet with Victor Aller (piano). 1-12" disc (*CLP-8269) \$5.95.

Lest one of our alert readers look back to our September 1951 issue and report that at that time we did

not find the Brahms *Trio in E-flat, Op. 40* very interesting, we will state in rebuttal that we didn't hear it played by a trio including that prince of American horn players, Mason Jones, on the French horn. For you will find, we think, that that makes all the difference. We now find it more than interesting, and repeated hearings indicate that we didn't know what we were missing. . . . Schumann's *Quartet in E-flat, Op. 47* appears here for the first time on LP; it will be of interest to those making collections of Schumann's chamber works.

Recording engineers tell us that one of the most difficult problems they have to solve in processing a recording is to determine on what type of playback equipment the item will most likely be played on. We rather feel that that particular question might be resolved in the case of most chamber music recordings, for it is largely the serious collector who indulges in this sort of thing, and he is not likely to be playing chamber music on an inexpensive phonograph; quite the contrary, it is more than likely that he has invested a considerable sum in his instrument, and really appreciates high fidelity reproduction as few others would. All of which is by way of saying that Capitol has recorded the Brahms *Quintet in F minor, Op. 34*, with this in mind, and has come up with one of the most lifelike records ever to have crossed our desk. Set your volume up, friend, and the Hollywood Quartet with Victor Aller is right there!

CHORAL



Byrd: The Great Service. (Sung in English). Chamber Chorus of Washington directed by Paul Callaway. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-453) \$5.95.

William Byrd (1543-1623) lived at the time of the Reformation in England, and in view of this fact we find some discrepancies in the jacket notes of this disc. The notes tell us that Byrd was a Roman Catholic and "... found himself ... forever at odds with the religion favored in England." Yet later we read that "One of the demands made by those who advocated the Reform was the substitution of English for Latin. . . . This in itself placed a tremendous burden upon the Church musicians. . . . Much of the pioneer work was done by Thomas Tallis (whose pupil Byrd was). . . . Byrd was only six years old when the Act of Uniformity (1549) was passed. . . . Thus by the time he reached musical maturity, he could bring his own genius to bear on the experimental groundwork that had been laid by Tallis." Grove's tell us that "... the composer throughout his life continued to compose music for the Latin Ritual. . . ." The jacket notes go on to say that *The Great Service* remained in oblivion for two and a half centuries, being rediscovered by Dr. Edmund H. Fellowes and transcribed by him for practical use; it was given its first modern performance in 1924. But no word as to

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
() indicates 45 rpm.

whether it was written for the English Church or for the Roman and then adopted by the Anglicans.

At any rate, *The Great Service* is divided into seven sections: Venite, Te Deum, Benedictus, Kyrie, Credo, Magnificat and Nunc dimittis. It was evidently written for some special occasion, for it is neither Matins, Mass, nor Evensong. It is beautiful music, however, magnificently rendered by the Chamber Chorus of Washington, delicately directed by Paul Callaway. If further proof were needed of Byrd's greatness as a composer, it will be found in this work; the purists (like myself) have only to stop wondering why it was written and just listen. Readable texts of the verses sung are included on the jacket. J.

The Obernkirchen Children's Choir. The Obernkirchen Children's Choir directed by Edith Möller. 1-10" disc (*ANG-64008) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Der frohliche Wanderer* (Möller); *Die Nordseewellen* (Krannig); *Lowenzahn* (Knab); *Landsknechtstandchen* (Lassus); *Der Lindenbaum* (Schubert); *Der Wirbelwind* (Möller); *Es waren zwei Königskinder* (arr. Möller); *Unsere kleine Mandoline* (Möller).

With Love from a Chorus. Male Chorus of the Robert Shaw Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1815) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Juanita*; *Aura Lee*; *Wait for the Wagon*; *Love's Old Sweet Song*; *When You and I Were Young*, Maggie; *Lorena*; *Sweet Genevieve*; *Li'l Liza Jane*; *Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party*; *Grandfather's Clock*; *Bonnie Eloise*; *Stars of the Summer Night*; *Home, Sweet Home*; *Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms*; *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes*; *Good Night, Ladies*.

"There descended upon New York yesterday, like a flock of bluebirds, the thirty girls and six boys of the Obernkirchen Children's Choir, here from Germany to make a series of appearances. . . . They range in age from 9 to 18 . . . (they) goggled at the buildings on West Fifty-Seventh Street . . . gazed in amazement at the motor cars." These quotes are from *The New York Times*, September 18, announcing the arrival of this talented bunch of youngsters from Obernkirchen.

The disc jockeys in Philadelphia have been playing *Der frohliche Wanderer* ("The Happy Wanderer") on the air for the past couple of weeks, and it has become a big hit here; once you hear it, you will understand why. We couldn't decide whether we like it or *Unsere kleine Mandoline* ("Our little Mandolin") better. Well trained, beautiful singing of unfamiliar but easy-to-like music.

The second disc listed above features sixteen more or less well-known songs performed capably by the male chorus of the Robert Shaw Chorale. If you fancy yourself a whiskey tenor, baritone, or whatnot, you might enjoy singing right along with the record. Makes you sound like a million dollars.

Haydn: The Creation (complete). (Sung in German). Sonja Vera Korch (soprano), Gerhard Unger (tenor) and Theo Adam (bass) with the Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Helmut Koch. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-235) \$11.90.

Haydn's *Creation* was completed in 1798, shortly before he commenced what was to be his last great work, *The Seasons*. In the *Creation*, as well as in the *Seasons*, one can sense the lessons he had learned from Handel and Mozart and, although to a lesser extent, from Beethoven. The music is not, in any sense, derivative—rather it is the work of a master musician who demonstrated that he could still learn and was still growing at the age of sixty-six.

The performance recorded here is a good one insofar as style, sensitivity of interpretation and over-all élan is concerned. It is all the more unfortunate, then, to have to report that the singers are only moderately endowed vocally. None are exceptional (and the writer firmly believes one has a right to expect exceptional voices on records) although they are almost always adequate. The tenor, Gerhard Unger, has a few unhappy moments in the lovely *Mit Wird und Froheit* (In Native Worth), but despite these inadequacies the aria is charmingly sung. Soprano Korch is the most satisfactory soloist, the basso, Theo Adam, being a nondescript singer having a few good moments but more poor ones.

Helmut Koch deserves most of the praise for his sympathetic reading of the score. Tempo and dynamics are always in good taste. The chorus and orchestra both are well trained and responsive groups that are a tower of strength and hold the performance together admirably.

An earlier recording of this music on Haydn Society was not available for comparison, but one's impression remains of a fine performance marred by somewhat stodgy and muddy sound. It would be well for the prospective purchaser to hear both. Recording here is pretty good, although Urania has done better. Notes and text are included. W.

Beethoven: Music to Goethe's "Egmont," Op. 84 (complete). Magda Laszlo (soprano) and Fred Liewehr (narrator) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5281) \$5.95.

This is the second complete recording of Beethoven's music for *Egmont*. It is hardly necessary to go into details of Beethoven's feeling for the play; it must suffice to note that he felt very strongly about the subject matter and wrote some of his finest music for it.

The present recording, after a rather dispirited performance of the *Overture*, goes on to really great heights. Magda Laszlo sings the two *lieder*, *Die Trommel gerühret* and *Freudvoll und Leidvoll*, with spirit and conviction—the orchestral passages here are wonderful! Miss Laszlo has lots of voice, and it is needed here. Needless to say, her performance is vocally

secure and dramatically effective. The other orchestral portions of the score are well played, and the music moves on to the *Melodrama* and *Siegssinfonie* in fine style. Fred Liewehr is a first class narrator—his diction is excellent, and the German language emerges as a thing of beauty.

An earlier recording of the same music on Vox (TNR Nov. '52) is overshadowed (the forces employed on the present disc are greater) although as an over-all performance, the earlier record might have a slight edge. Nowadays, however, sound seems to tell (or sell); and while this disc does not rank with Westminster's best efforts (one suspects the tape was made several years ago), it is still pretty good.

Copious notes, text and translation of both *lied* and spoken word are included. W.

Charpentier: Magnificat in D. (Sung in Latin). One side, and **Charpentier: (5) Selections.** Claudine Collart (soprano), Yvonne Melchior (alto), Jean Archimbaud (counter-tenor), Pierre Gianotti (tenor) and Louis Noguera (bass) with the Chamber Orchestra of the Concerts Padeloup and the Chorale of the Jeunesses Musicales de France conducted by Louis Martini. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-102) \$5.95.

The recordings of Marc-Antoine Charpentier's music, sponsored by the Charpentier Society, go on apace. This time it is Haydn Society who issues a collection of this neglected 17th century Master's music. The major work included on this disc is the most brilliant of Charpentier's eleven Magnificats. It is written in the key of D and calls for five soloists, two choirs and two orchestras. This Magnificat was probably written for a festive performance at the Church of the Jesuits in Paris, where Charpentier was *maitre de musique* during the middle years of his life. Musically, it is a superb piece of high baroque, and all concerned are to be congratulated for rescuing it from oblivion.

The other, shorter items, are also superior examples of French musical art. The excerpt from the *Tenebrae Service* is a thoroughly enjoyable essay, as are the *Salve Regina* and the antiphon *Regina coeli*. Another impressive piece is the "Offertory" from the *Mass for Instruments*.

The performers, both instrumentalists and singers, are enthusiastic and capable. Special praise must be reserved for the editor, Guy-Lambert, who has performed his delicate duties with taste and understanding. Conductor Martini also has done a fine job with his forces, and the net result is a musical experience to be remembered and, fortunately, to be enjoyed at will.

The recording is good, although in some of the louder passages it tends to "break up"—due, not so much to faulty recording as, one suspects, to errors of judgment in cutting the record masters. Scholarly notes and the complete texts are supplied. W.



OPERA

Verdi: Falstaff (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw, and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6111) \$17.85.

Falstaff.....Giuseppe Valdengo (bs)
Fenton.....Antonio Madasi (t)
Ford.....Frank Guarrera (bt)
Dr. Caius.....Gabor Carelli (t)
Bardolph.....John Carmen Rossi (t)
Pistol.....Norman Scott (bt)
Mistress Ford.....Herva Nelli (s)
Nannetta.....Teresa Stich-Randall (s)
Mistress Page.....Nan Merriman (s)
Mistress Quickly.....Cloe Elmo (s)

Falstaff is one of those works of musical art that receives virtually unanimous critical acclaim but very few, relatively speaking, actual performances. It is a work of wonderful imagination, of uncanny freshness; but in it Verdi either did not want to, or was unable to, breathe life into his characters—they remain almost puppets despite Boito's ingenious libretto.

Nevertheless, *Falstaff* remains a considerable musical experience, and as recorded here under Toscanini's brisk and firm direction it becomes a valued addition to the recorded repertory. Especially valuable because one can turn to it again and again, and it is very definitely the sort of music that is more rewarding on successive hearings.

The performance is, of course, the same as the broadcasts of April 1st and 8th, 1950. Giuseppe Valdengo sings the title role in a very acceptable fashion. To be sure, there are richer-voiced baritones (Valdengo has very little top to his voice), but serious rehearsals and a strong hand at the helm make up for most of his vocal shortcomings. Frank Guarrera sounds very good, indeed, and sings with unwonted dramatic fervor. The Fenton of Antonio Madasi is more than adequate, as are the rest of the male members of the long cast.

The distaff side is all to the good. It is headed by the lovely lyric soprano of Herva Nelli (why aren't there more records by this gifted singer?) as Mistress Ford and the dark expressive mezzo of Cloe Elmo (Mistress Quickly). Also included are Nan Merriman and Teresa Stich-Randall, who more than hold their own in the distinguished company.

It is, in the last analysis, Toscanini who holds the production together and makes it the memorable affair it is. RCA has done a fine job in the recording department and an equally fine one in the art (packaging) division. There is one minor slip—Mistress Ford and Mistress Page are not identified in the libretto other than by their Christian names of Alice and Meg. For prospective purchaser's convenience they are Mistresses Alice Ford and Meg Page.

To sum up, the set is unreservedly recommended—

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
() indicates 45 rpm.

it is technically superior to the Cetra recording, perhaps a little inferior vocally, while Rossi (Cetra) and Toscanini can be said to run a dead heat in the conditorial sweepstakes. W.

Verdi: Rigoletto (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Cetra Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Radiotelevisione Italiana (Turin) conducted by Angelo Questa. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-C-1247) \$17.85.

Duke of Mantua.....Ferruccio Tagliavini (t)
Rigoletto.....Giuseppe Taddei (bt)
Gilda.....Lina Pagliughi (s)
Sparafucile.....Giulio Neri (bs)

Verdi's *Rigoletto*, despite its enormous popularity, has only achieved one worthy LP recording, prior to this one: that on RCA Victor (TNR Nov. '50). The present performance, with a fine cast, is a first-rate one, superior in some respects to the earlier set but, unfortunately, it lacks two features of its predecessor—good recording and sure direction.

Rigoletto, as sung by Giuseppe Taddei, is, perhaps, one of the finest portrayals of the role on records, being surpassed only by the fabulous discs made by Apollo Granforte two decades or more ago. Taddei's performance is marked by expressiveness and good taste—both characteristics made possible by his glorious voice and musical intelligence. It is a stirring conception.

Lina Pagliughi sings a beautiful Gilda; she sings it so well it is hard to realize that she was the Gilda in the early (c. 1927) complete *Rigoletto* made by HMV in Italy. Certainly she sounds amazingly youthful, and her characterization is notable for its sureness and achievement of effect—marks of a seasoned artist.

Ferruccio Tagliavini is in fine voice but is a wooden Duke, dramatically; in fact Jan Peerce, his counterpart in the Victor set, is far superior without having nearly as beautiful a voice. Giulio Neri is a sinister Sparafucile and a very musical one. The others in the cast are more than adequate.

The orchestra and chorus are under the direction of Angelo Questa, who usually follows the singer's lead. This is not always as bad as it sounds, for Taddei and Pagliughi know their way through the opera, and their singing of the third act finale, *Si vendetta!*, is a veritable tour-de-force. Still, it would have helped had Questa had a firmer hand on the proceedings elsewhere in the opera.

By and large it is the rather poor sound (voices forward, orchestra relegated, in most instances, to the background) that places the set second to the earlier RCA Victor recording. A libretto is included. W.

Weill: Die Dreigroschenoper (complete). (Sung in English). Soloists and street band conducted by Samuel Matlowky. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3121) \$4.85.

With the recent "off-Broadway" success of Kurt Weill's *The Threepenny Opera* it was to be expected that some enterprising company would issue this re-

cording, and MGM deserves praise for its efforts. Marc Blitzstein's English adaptation has not changed the original score in the least. One would have given much to have been in the Theater am Schiffbauerdamm on 28 August, 1928, at the premier of this work, to see the startled looks on the faces of that first night audience when the curtain opened on a street organ and cabaret band.

We should imagine that to hear this disc without ever having seen the work would be somewhat of a shock. However, if one gets out his magnifying glass (so he can read MGM's super-fine print), he can get the picture from the excellent notes on the jacket. Just to give you a hint of what's in store for you, the "orchestra" consists of a piano, two clarinets, two trumpets, trombone, banjo and/or guitar, and percussion (MGM "misprints" this word: "jercussion").

If, however, you have seen the performance at the Theater de Lys, New York, here is a memento of one of the great contemporary works to enjoy whenever you wish.



VOCAL

Italian Songs (Vol. I). Gianni Poggi (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Ernesto Nicello. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9111) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Dicitencello Vuje* (Falvo); *Voce e Notte* (Curtis); *Torna a Surriento* (Curtis); *Marechiarie* (Tosti); *O Sole Mio* (Capua); *Maria, Mari!* (Capua).

Italian Songs (Vol. II). Gianni Poggi (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Ernesto Nicello. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9112) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Non t'Odio no!* (Manchini); *Addio, Sogni di Gloria* (Rivi); *Non ti Scordar di Me* (Curtis); *Mattinata Siciliana* (Mazziotti); *Domani Turnarra* (Innocenzi); *Capelli Bianchi* (Carabella); *Malia di Napoli* (Stellari); *Ricordi di quei di Musica* (Carabella).

Operatic Recital. Gianni Poggi (tenor) with the Orchestra of Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9106) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Luisa Miller*—Quando le sere al placido; *Il Trovatore*—Ah! Si ben mio; *Il Trovatore*—Di quella pira; *Manon Lescaut*—Donna non vidi mai; *Gianni Schicci*—Firenze e come un albiero fiorito; *Andrea Chenier*—Come un bel di di maggio; *Fedora*—Amor ti vieta.

This month London introduces, with quite a splash, tenor Gianni Poggi to the American public. To be sure, Poggi has been heard on records before, but never to such advantage. Of the three discs, two are devoted to Italian songs and include such perennial favorites as *O Sole Mio*, *Torna a Surriento* and *Marechiarie*, as well as many less familiar ones. All, without exception, are very beautifully sung in a clear rich tenor voice that has range, color and power. Poggi, as might be expected, is thoroughly at home

in this material, and it is to his eternal credit that he does not try to blow the songs up to three times life size—his is an entirely praiseworthy recital.

The third disc also contains much excellent singing, including one of the finest *Di quella pira* the writer has heard on records. All it lacks to make it one of the two or three all time best is the chorus. Another superbly sung selection is the dramatic recitative and moving aria *Quando le sere al placido*. This is, beyond a doubt, the best version of this famous aria on records. After these two exciting affairs, the rest of the disc is less electrifying, although the *Gianni Schicci* and *Fedora* arias are both tastefully and expressively sung.

The recording on all three discs is good, and the accompaniments in the capable hands of Erede (opera) and Nicello (songs) leave nothing to be desired. The notes for the operatic disc are satisfactory but more could have been done for the songs—the notes for both volumes are identical and tell nothing of the songs themselves. Texts on all three jackets are conspicuous by their absence. W.

A Recital of Old French Airs. Gérard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9109) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Cachez, Beaux Yeux* (Boessel); *Ma Bergère non Légère* (Bataille); *Noël* (Anon.); *Brezairola* (Anon.); *Malurous qu'o uno Fenno* (Anon.); *Chanson Louis XIII* (Couperin); *Cette Anne si Belle* (Guedron); *Tambourin* (Anon.); *Me Veux-tu Voir Mourir?* (Boesset).

Songs of Gounod. Gérard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9110) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Chanson du Printemps*; *Ce que je Suis sans Toi*; *Ma Belle Amie Est Morte*; *Venise*; *O Ma Belle Rebelle*; *Viens! Les Gazons Sont Verts!*; *Les Deux Pigeons*.

Old music is getting quite a big play these days by the various record companies and, as is always the case where quantity becomes a factor, the question of quality raises its head. The first of these two discs is devoted to "antique" French songs, and several of them have no merit other than their antiquity. The recital opens with a *chanson* by the thirteenth Louis and goes on through eight other *morceaux* of varying musical interest. For those who value music for its rarity, some of the items recorded here will please on this account alone. Students of the period will find the collection of some interest, but the lack of detailed information concerning the selections is a serious drawback. In short, the record has a specialized appeal. M. Souzay sings with style and expression, and it would be difficult to imagine a more ingratiating performance. Mlle. Bonneau's accompaniments are models of clarity.

The Gounod disc, in contrast to the other, is a sheer delight from start to finish. This writer, for one, was quite unaware that the author of *Faust*,

Roméo et Juliette and other less successful operas was a song writer of more than passing merit. While none of these songs (except, perhaps the first) could challenge the efforts of Schubert or, maybe, Brahms, they are, nonetheless, little gems of French clarity and lyricism. The *Chanson du Printemps*, with its beautiful melodies, is almost Schubertian; the better known *Venise* is a magical barcarolle; and so on down the line; each song has unexpected little characteristics that make it as interesting on the fifth hearing as on the first. Here again, all Gérard Souzay's Gallic artistry and charm are brought to bear on the music—the result is a recital the like of which one seldom hears in our concert halls.

Recording is good, the notes are only fair, and no texts are supplied. W.

Ballads of Long Ago. Joseph Marais and Miranda with the Pardo Ancient Instrument Ensemble. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4894) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Chow Willy*, *The Lair of Cockpen*, *In Egypt*, *Messenger of Love*, *A Legend of St. Nicholas*, *The Dilly Song*, *The Rumble Drum*, *Mother Mary Is Rocking Her Child*, *Berg op Zoom*, *The Sheep under the Snow*, *The Welcome*, *The Silver Fleet*.

Marais and Miranda are probably as famous a pair of folk singers as you'll find these days, and deservedly so. Their *Songs of the South African Veldt* series for Decca have been consistent sellers through the years. Besides this they have had a couple of their tunes on the Hit Parade, have made a number of successful kiddie discs, and 1953 saw the premier of their opera, *Tony Beaver*, in Idyllwild, Calif.

Marais and Miranda met in the OWI in 1939, and they worked together for three years before Marais, who had his own radio show at the time, chanced to hear Miranda sing; this was the beginning of their careers together, and they were eventually married in 1947, a marriage "obviously planned in Minstrel Heaven," as columnist Claudia Cassidy observed at the time.

We doubt that many of these songs will be familiar to most of our readers. We hope, however, that that will not deter those interested from trying this disc. It is as captivating a folk disc as you are likely to come across in a long time; there is not a "lemon" in the lot. The accompaniments by the Pardo Ancient Instrument Ensemble are fitting and in no wise detract from the singing. Columbia's best reproduction is evident throughout. J.

Bing. Bing Crosby (vocals) with instrumental accompaniments and running commentary by Bing Crosby. 5-12" discs in box (*D-DX-151) \$27.50.

We learn that Decca is celebrating, this year, its twentieth anniversary, and to help commemorate this it is presenting this elaborate album of 89 songs by its very first artist, Bing Crosby. We have no doubt that this set will appeal to Mr. C's many fans, both for the singing and for the disarming comments he

makes about each number. No matter how you may feel about the merits of Bing's broken-down baritone, you will have to admit that he has come farther as a singer than anyone else who can't sing; the statement on the inside cover of the box is amazing, but probably true: "The voice of Bing Crosby has been heard by more people than the voice of any other human being who ever lived."

The songs trace the history of Harry Lillis "Bing" Crosby from the early Whiteman days (with The Rhythm Boys) to the present; the older numbers are re-recorded, the newer ones are taken from actual masters. No duds here. Included in the box (which locks, by the way, and a key is provided) is a 23-page booklet, tracing the history and giving a complete (available) discography of "Der Bingle." All in all, a most successful accomplishment.

Gospel Songs. Missionary Quintet. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-824) \$4.75.

CONTENTS: *Dry Bones; On This Side of Jordan; In That New Jerusalem; Jesus on My Mind; Let the Church Roll On; My Lord Did Deliver; I Got a Home in That Rock; Give Me That Old Time Religion; Climbing Up the Mountain.*

The style of performance of these spirituals is difficult to describe to one who has never heard it. About the best we can do is say that the Missionary Quartet sings in a syncopated style much as you would hear on radio or TV programs featuring gospel singing by the local Negro quartet, with each hymn sounding just like another. It is nothing at all like the Mills Brothers or the Ink Spots; nor is it "barber shop" singing. So far as we know there is nothing like this on records at the present time. What this group lacks in professional finish they more than make up for in zeal; if you want "Dat Old Time Religion," here are nine Gospel Hymns to put you in the mood.

Songs by Tom Lehrer. Tom Lehrer, his lyrics, his music, his so-called voice and his piano. 1-10" disc (*LEHRER TLP-1) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Fight Fiercely, Harvard; The Old Dope Peddler; Be Prepared; The Wild West Is Where I Want to Be; I Wanna Go Back to Dixie; Lobachevsky; The Irish Ballad; The Hunting Song; My Home Town; (3) Love Songs ("When You Are Old and Gray," "I Hold Your Hand in Mine," "The Wiener Schnitzel Waltz").*

"This recording of the imitable songs of Tom Lehrer has been issued, in spite of widespread popular demand for its suppression, primarily for the benefit of a small but diminishing group of admirers of his dubious talents, talents which have been on display for several years at functions, orgies, and divers festive occasions around Harvard University, where he was in attendance until June 1953, as undergraduate student, and teacher of mathematics. . . . Now at last some of the songs with which he has been revolting local audiences for years are available to all, and it is no wonder that a great deal of public apathy

has been stirred up at the prospect."

With this quote, taken from the jacket notes, we introduce Tom Lehrer's biting satirical (often macabre) lyrics, extremely clever music, bathroom baritone, and deft piano accompaniments. News of this privately issued recording (the reproduction of which is superior!) was passed about quietly by word of mouth. We would not dare to recommend this disc unreservedly in print but if you'd drop in to our studio, we'd wink and ask, "Want to hear something terrific?"

ORGAN

The Mario Salvador Concert Series (Vol. I). Mario Salvador, playing the Kilgen organ at the St. Louis (Mo.) Cathedral. 1-12" disc (*TECHNISONIC TMS-1/2) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Pontifical March (Gounod); Capriccio (Lemaigre); Trumpet Tune (Purcell); Toccata in D minor (Bach); The Rosary (Nevin); Grand Choeur Dialogue (Gigout); Symphonic Poem—March (Van Hulse).*

The Mario Salvador Concert Series (Vol. II). Mario Salvador, playing the Kilgen organ at the St. Louis (Mo.) Cathedral. 1-12" disc (*TECHNISONIC TMS-3/4) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Pièce Héroïque (Franck); Prelude II ("Puer Natus Est") (Campbell-Watson); Ave Maria (Schubert); Fugue à la Gigue (Bach); Festival Postlude on "Veni Creator" (Van Hulse).*

For sheer listening pleasure, Mario Salvador at the St. Louis Cathedral organ, in these well-chosen programs, will bring pleasure to thousands who love wonderful organ music. That is just what we have here, wonderful, glorious organ tone, captured with a richness and bloom rare even in today's fine records. This is a big organ, with a traditional tone that proves to be a welcome antidote to the baroque screechiness all too prevalent these days. The organ is placed in a building of long resonance, but the engineers have managed to preserve the utmost clarity in these recordings, the echo being heard only at the end of the selection or where a long pause occurs. Technically these records are superb; and while it is not so indicated, it is a fact that RCA did the processing of them, resulting in smooth surfaces.

Another unique feature of these discs is a virtuoso concert organist who takes his time and does not consider speed the prime requisite of virtuosity. Mario Salvador's playing is a model of clarity and clean playing, and he does it in the grand manner with a minimum of rhythmic distortion—but where retard is indicated, he knows how to pull it in a magnificent and thrilling manner—rather reminiscent of the great Mengelberg retards. As for the music, these numbers are as interesting, pleasant, and listenable as any organ collections we ever heard. There is Bach, American composers, several favorites—Salvador's playing



of the Schubert *Ave Maria* is unforgettable — and several showpieces such as the Gigout *Grand Choeur Dialogue*, one of our favorites. Students will find Salvador's playing of the Bach *Gigue Fugue* a lesson worth the price of the whole disc. The 37 year old Mario Salvador, born in the Dominican Republic, has studied with many great teachers, and has had a brilliant career as a recitalist.

This series of records will be continued, probably with a Christmas record next, and we are mighty anxious for it. These discs are recommended with enthusiasm and without reservations of any kind.

S.

DICTION



Albert Ramsbottom, Sam Small and Uthers. Wallace House (reading) with guitar accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-FP-99) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: *Albert and the Lion; The Return of Albert; Albert and the 'Eadsman; Runcorn Ferry* ("Tuppence per Person per Trip"); *The Jubilee Sov'rin; Goalkeeper Joe; Little Aggie; The Night before Waterloo; Marksman Sam; 'Alt! 'Oo Goes Theer?; The Magna Charter; The Battle of Hastings; Gunner Joe; Three 'Alpence a Foot.*

Those of us who have many of the old 78's of these priceless bits of Lancashire humor, recited by Stanley Holloway, will find that it takes a bit of getting used to the dialect of Wallace House; and we will sorely miss the inimitable piano obbligato of Wolseley Charles, which seemed to be "just right" for these monologues.

But, alas! The old Holloways are no longer available. And 'alf a loaf is better than none. By the time we had played Mr. House's disc all the way through, we were quite used to his diction; and we had to admit it IS easier to understand than Holloway's, particularly for the uninitiated. House does these poems straight—doesn't jazz them up or induce any off-color stuff, like Pat O'Malley is wont to do. And the guitar (could be a zither) is in good taste. Albert's deviltry and Sam's stubbornness live again.

A booklet giving the words to each poem is included.

J.

PIANO



Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition. Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-10" disc in box, with illustrated brochure (*CL-LAL-8266) \$4.94.

NOTE: For review of this disc, see under ORCHESTRA.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, GSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 () indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PAGE 16

The New Records

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AT LONG LAST someone has come out with an easy-to-insert center, that will stay put, for 45 rpm discs, and we hasten to pass the news on to our readers who may have been troubled with this problem. Heretofore there have been only the plastic (or fibre) inserts, which were relatively easy to install but which would fall out at the drop of the hat (or drop of the record, to be more apt), or the Webcor metal ones, which would stay put but which were tricky to put in.

Kirsch Music Corp. has come to the rescue with a metal insert which snaps in as easily as the plastic inserts, but which stays in (unless you wish to snap it out again) even though you tap it, knock it, or what you will. These inserts, called "Snap-It," cost 29¢ for five. If your local dealer cannot supply them, they may be obtained from the publisher of this bulletin. The price includes postage to any point in U.S.A. (Add 1% sales tax for delivery in Pennsylvania).

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-two years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning November 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Bartók: *Concerto for Orchestra*. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50033) \$5.95.

A growing appreciation of the works of Béla Bartók is manifest everywhere in the music world today, and

it is reflected also in the LP catalogs, for the list of his recorded works is impressively long. He is emerging as one of the truly great composers who will join the ranks of the immortals whose works are ageless. This reviewer is coming more solidly in line with those who enjoy and appreciate Bartók's genius, and each new hearing is more convincing. The *Concerto for Orchestra* is one of the master's most accessible works, and those who stick to symphonic fare will find this work fascinating in texture.

Bartók's own program notes for this work (written for the Boston Symphony Orchestra) include these descriptive remarks: "The general mood of the work represents, apart from the jesting second movement, a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death song of the third, to the life assertion of the last one. The title of this symphony-like orchestral work is explained by its tendency to treat the single instruments or instrumental groups in a concertant or soloistic manner. The 'virtuoso' treatment appears, for instance, in the fugato sections of the development of the first movement (brass instruments), or in the perpetuum mobile-like passage of the principal theme in the last movement (strings), and especially in the second movement, in which pairs of instruments consecutively appear with brilliant passages."

Many of the sections mentioned by Bartók are echoed by Mercury in its effort to point out the spots to listen to for an appreciation of its success in hi-fi reproduction, and Mercury has something to be proud of, for this is a reproduction of the first magnitude. Mercury claims an "orchestral sound of extraordinary brilliance, clarity of texture and justness of balance," and (we might add) a sweet brilliance and a remarkable illusion of orchestral tone. This one is really a honey!

Antal Dorati is second to none as an interpreter of his teacher, friend and fellow countryman, Bartók; and whatever the merits of the recorded performances of this work by Reiner, Van Beinum and Von Karajan, Dorati's reading is one of knowledge and conviction, and played with stunning virtuosity by the orchestra, resulting in one of Mercury's finest records. S.

R. Strauss: *Ein Heldenleben*, Op. 40. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy, with Jacob Krachmalnick (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4887) \$5.95.

It seems we just finished writing about *Ein Helden-*

leben, in a praiseworthy edition by Fritz Reiner, and in a hi-fi recording of colossal dimensions (*V-LM-1807, TNR October 1954). And now yet another version is upon us; and we must not forget the altogether admirable LP's by Dorati and by Krauss. Of course, there is the Philadelphia Orchestra in this one, which counts for a lot with many persons, an orchestra hard to beat for virtuosity and often incredibly beautiful tone. The solo passages in this one are played by concertmaster Jacob Krachmalnick, a young man whose playing has deservedly won the highest praise. He does the best solo fiddling to be heard in any of the *Ein Heldenleben* on discs. Ormandy, Reiner, and Krauss are all considered top-notch interpreters of Richard Strauss; and while Dorati may not be noted for his Strauss, the *Ein Heldenleben* which Dorati committed to discs is quite surely in a class with the other three conductors. Which is preferable is more than we could begin to argue. All are worthy readings, and all are well played by the respective orchestras.

For many this work on discs will boil down to which has the highest fi, for each company has used this display piece as a vehicle for demonstrating its best orchestral recording. Which is the best will depend more often than not on the instrument you are using. On our phonograph, the best recording is the present disc by Columbia, based on complete naturalness of tone, sweetness of the powerful passages, and clarity. This would seem to be Columbia's masterpiece in hi-fi orchestral sound. It mirrors the famous Philadelphia Orchestra with uncanny lifelikeness. And when Ormandy gets the boys warmed up at the beginning of the second side of this disc there is not much on records that is more thrilling—even if you hate the music, you must admire the magnificent panoply of sound. Be sure to hear it, even if you already own another version of this work, and even if you do not like the music. We will not name a victor in this contest of *Ein Heldenleben*; at the moment we can only hear the splendor of the Ormandy-Philadelphia-Columbia combination. S.

Piston: Symphony No. 3. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40010) \$5.95.

An important first recording comes to us this month from Mercury: Piston's *Symphony No. 3*, performed by the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra under Howard Hanson, probably the greatest protagonist and promoter of the music of American composers today. And a fine performance it is, too.

Walter Piston (1894-) wrote the *Third* in 1947 at the commission of the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, winning the 1947 Pulitzer prize in musical composition; it was premiered in the following year by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. It is divided into four movements: Andantino, a prelude-like movement based on three thematic elements, slow and sombre; Allegro, a scherzo in three-part form, brisk and lively; Adagio, in four sections, starting softly

and slowly and building up to a full orchestral climax in the third section before returning to the opening theme; and Allegro, with its two themes, the first fugal and the second march-like, boisterous and effervescent.

Nicolas Slonimsky has said about Piston: "Among American composers, Walter Piston appears as a builder of a future academic style, taking this definition without any derogatory implications. There are composers who draw on folk-lore, and . . . who seek new colors, new rhythms, new harmonies. Walter Piston codifies rather than invents. His imagination supplies him with excellent ideas, and out of the material he builds his music without words, descriptive titles and literature. He is an American composer speaking the international idiom of absolute music." When you hear Piston's *Third*, you will think that Slonimsky was right.

Howard Hanson keeps a firm hand on the orchestra and renders what, to us, seems an inspired and loving performance. You will want to hear this work two or three times before making up your mind about it, if Piston is a new composer to you; but if Hanson's reading and Mercury's superb reproduction cannot sell you the work, then nothing could. J.

The Orchestral Music of Johannes Brahms. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 4-12" discs in album (*C-SL-200) \$29.95.

CONTENTS: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68; Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73; Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90; Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98; Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a; Tragic Overture, Op. 81; Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80; (4) Hungarian Dances, Nos. 1, 3, 10 & 17.*

This set is obviously Columbia's answer to RCA Victor's Toscanini album of the four Brahms Symphonies, and a very convincing answer it is. Dr. Walter is certainly closer to Brahms both mentally and spiritually than Arturo Toscanini is and makes his effects in a manner almost diametrically opposed to that of his Italian confrère.

Bruno Walter's reading of the *First Symphony* has always been a prime favorite with this reviewer and while this one does not quite have the magic of the pre-war set (78's) made with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, it is still an extremely satisfactory performance. The *Second Symphony* goes along swimmingly for the first three movements but then, and this is very unusual in Bruno Walter, the *finale* is driven unmercifully and it emerges in the end as battle between conductor and orchestra. The result, for those interested, is a dead heat and a dead fourth movement. But what a fine thing Dr. Walter makes of the great *Third Symphony*. From the opening heroic chords (very seldom played with the verve and élan elicited here) on through to the end, it is a veritable blaze of glory. The more sombre *Fourth Symphony* is played with loving care and is properly autumnal.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 O Indicates 45 rpm.

The other works are uniformly excellent as performances, the *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* being just about the best available. The two overtures (neither particular favorites with the writer) are well played, although one feels that the *Academic Festival Overture* should be more bumptious—Dr. Walter's students are extremely well behaved. The *Hungarian Dances* are interesting fill-ins.

The recording is a little uneven, but never very poor. The *Fourth Symphony* is the oldest recording, one imagines, but the *Third* and the *Haydn Variations* are very good indeed. Almost as good, and still quite acceptable, are the *First* and *Second Symphonies*. A very de luxe package, plus a "free" (for \$6.15) 10-inch LP of an actual rehearsal (you can hear Walter humming the themes, talking (!) to the musicians, etc.) complete the offering, along with notes, pictures and analyses. W.

Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien. Op. 45. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol, Op. 34.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-W-LAB-7002) \$7.50.

This writer has been looking forward with considerable anticipation to the first release in the Westminster Laboratory Series and is glad to report at the outset that on this occasion his anticipations were fulfilled. Certainly here is the ultimate in recorded sound—thus far, one hastens to add, for microgroove recording is only about six years old.

There are several reasons for the superior quality. For one thing, variable pitch (of the record grooves) is used, to a greater extent than is customary. Then too, there is only about sixteen minutes of music on each side, thus precluding the necessity of placing of sound in the inner grooves with a resultant loss of quality. Other contributing factors are low volume level and extreme care in the processing both as regards the making of the masters and the subsequent pressings.

On an instrument designed for "High Fidelity" (that overworked term!), reproduction of the record is an exciting affair. Neither of the selections rank as favorites with this department, although they are ideal choices for such a demonstration record as this. One could almost believe they were written for the purpose. The disc, musically speaking, is one where the tail wags the dog; the recording becomes an end in itself, rather than a means to an end.

Before leaving the subject of demonstration records and "show off" pieces for the hi-fi fan, it would be interesting to have Westminster issue a vocal record in this Laboratory Series—a group of operatic arias including some with chorus, for the human voice is notoriously difficult to record and reproduce; to hear vocal music in as realistic a manner as the orchestra is here reproduced would be a thrilling experience.

This disc, as intimated earlier, makes a stunning effect on a wide range reproducer and must rank as the best efforts to date of the many attempts to capture

the sound of a full symphony orchestra in all its realism. In fact, one suspects the record of being better than even the most advanced reproducing equipment. W.

Stravinsky: Symphony in C (1940). Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. One side, and **Stravinsky: Cantata (1952).** Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano); Hugues Cuenod (tenor); Members of the New York Concert Choir directed by Margaret Hillis; and the Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4899) \$5.95.

Shapero: Symphony for Classical Orchestra. Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4889) \$5.95.

Not being too much in sympathy with most of Stravinsky's later works, it came as a surprise to find the *Symphony in C* an interesting and absorbing work. It is more concerned with matters traditional than many of his works. Its very form is along classical lines, with the first movement being close to classical sonata form. While there is no blazing emotional impact to the music, there is less of the splash of icy water effect usually present in Stravinsky scores. If he could only have warmed up that sparsely scored second movement *Larghetto*, this symphony might have had a real appeal. As it is, we can recommend it to those who like the Stravinsky of the earlier works, and can surely recommend it as an authoritative performance, well played and very well recorded.

Stravinsky's *Cantata* is a secular work for solo mezzo-soprano, tenor, female chorus, and instrumental quintet of 2 flutes, 2 oboes (the 2nd interchangeable with English horn) and 'cello. He selected four popular anonymous lyrics of the 15th and 16th centuries, verses which attracted the composer for their beauty and their compelling syllabification as well as for their musical construction. The music makes use of early devices such as canons, and has more the flavor of early music than of modern music. This is music skillfully written, the work of a real master; but whether it has a beauty of sufficient appeal is something only you can help time tell. The artists concerned with this performance must believe in it, for theirs is a performance of admirable beauty and finish, and of seemingly sincere projection of the words. A fascinating LP first for connoisseurs of modern art, and of Stravinsky in particular.

A most promising future has been predicted for Harold Shapero by the distinguished composer Aaron Copland. This 34 year old New Englander has produced here a score that displays a skill that is exceptional, and an ability to create music that is attention-compelling and pleasant to hear. The music is given a capital performance by some crack orchestra, here called the Columbia Symphony, under the dynamic direction of Leonard Bernstein (recorded under the auspices of The Koussevitzky Music Foundation, Inc.), and brilliantly reproduced. For those interested

in new scores, this is one not to be missed; even old-timers may enjoy it. S.

Offenbach: Gaité Parisienne. One side, and **Chopin: Les Sylphides.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4895) \$5.95.

Oh, oh! Last month we said you wouldn't get a better version of *Gaité Parisienne* than Fiedler and the Boston Pops (*V-LM-1817). Well, this one's no better, but it is mighty fine . . . mighty fine! Fiedler's is complete, while Mr. Ormandy gives us only 10 sections comprising the highlights—but that's enough for most persons. We rather feel, too, that *Les Sylphides* will be preferred to Meyerbeer's *Les Patineurs* (the Victor coupling) by the majority of record buyers.

We have indicated the bases on which you must choose; now to each his own.

Smetana: Ma Vlast—Vltava, Z českých luhů a hájů ("The Moldau") and "From Bohemia's Meadows and Forests"). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. One side, and **Dvořák**—arr. Szell: **Slavonic Dances.** Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4785) \$5.95.

A fine recording for those who do not wish the complete recording of Smetana's *My Fatherland* (*ME-OL-2-100). The *Slavonic Dances* are performed with verve and spirit and make a most fitting coupling.

Ravel: La Valse. One side, and **Ravel: Bolero.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-51) \$2.85.

Although there are many fine recordings of both of these pieces, there are no recordings of *Bolero* by a front rank orchestra on a low-priced LP; and at the risk of being accused of being overly partial to our own Philadelphia Orchestra, we will say that we prefer the present performance to the Münch version of *La Valse* (*V-LRM-7016), the only competition, price-wise, to Ormandy's.

Verdi: La Traviata (Orchestral Synthesis). Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4896) \$5.95.

The demand for opera without words seems to be fairly large at the moment, and both Columbia and Kostelanetz seem ready, and most able, to satisfy it. If you liked *Carmen* (*C-ML-4826, TNR May '54) and *La Bohème* (*C-ML-4655, TNR May '53), you'll think *La Traviata* is great.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Erich Kleiber. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-920) \$5.95.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66003) \$5.95.

It is no pleasure to report that one of the great conductors of our time has one of the poorest recordings of the *Pathétique* in the LP lists, and he may

sit in the corner with Abendroth, Brown, Von Karajan, Toscanini, and a few others who have messed up this work on records. When all is said and done, you either play it like Tchaikovsky or you don't; and if you don't want to play it like an honest piece of music, then don't play it at all. Playing the notes on the page for their face value is an impossible way of creating music, and nothing shows it up more than some romantic work such as the *Pathétique*. Nobody, but nobody (to borrow a Gimbel slogan) beats Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra in this work. Ormandy lets the music speak for itself with only the gentlest urging, with a healthy regard for the Tchaikovskian idiom, and with a noble regard for what makes decent music—and his orchestra creates magnificent sound which Columbia captured with thrilling fidelity (*C-ML-4544, TNR Oct. '54). Steinberg also did a splendid job with this work, and we have liked the Kubelik version as a third choice. That's the score to date, and we bet it will be a long time before it is changed. And for the record, not only is Kleiber's work disappointing, but the Paris Conservatory Orchestra plays about as poorly as we ever have heard them on discs, and London's reproduction does not compare with its best efforts. This one should have been put on ice indefinitely.

Nearly three years ago Capitol issued a recording of the Brahms *First* by Keilberth and the Berlin Philharmonic and we received it with warm praise and admiration, an opinion not shared by all reviewers. Whether this is the same performance or not could not be determined at this writing; if it is, the sound has been enhanced a bit, as our recollection goes; yet it is not with the very best of today's issues. However, if the sound is good on your phonograph, you will find here a reading that is unhurried without being measured or boring, an approach nicely built on tradition—German tradition. There is a startlingly poor tape splice, or something clumsy, which occurs about two-thirds the way through the first movement, and there is something like it again near the end of the last movement, and some pre-echo; possibly some apprentice was learning the trade over in England where this disc was processed and made. Too bad; it spoils the good Berlin Philharmonic playing. S.

Debussy: (3) Nocturnes ("Nuages," "Fêtes," "Sirenes"). One side, and **Debussy: Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune.** And **Debussy: Marche Ecossaise.** Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by D. E. Inghelbrecht. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35103TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35103) \$5.95.

Franck: Variations Symphoniques. One side, and **d'Indy: Symphony in G for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 25.** Aldo Ciccolini (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35104TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35104) \$5.95.

With the LP repertoire repeating itself with in-

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
Ø indicates 45 rpm.

creasing frequency (this is the fifth recording of the *Trois Nocturnes*) it is difficult to see how there is room for another one, particularly in view of the fact that two of this set's predecessors were very good: Ansermet's and Dorati's. And yet, on hearing it, one can easily sense its merit. Whether or not it is superior to the two aforementioned sets is debatable—this writer actually preferred it to both, principally for its intensely Gallic feeling. One can readily understand why it won the *Grand Prix du Disque*. The other side is devoted to an equally fine *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune* with the flute solo beautifully played by Fernand Dufrène and, for a curiosity, and that is all it is, a *Marche Écossaise* dating from 1891 and orchestrated in 1908. M. Inghelbrecht, an old-timer phonographically speaking, conducts with precision and logic. Fine recorded sound helps his interpretations get across. Very highly recommended.

Two works by French *petits-mâtres* make another excellent coupling on the second Angel disc listed above. d'Indy's *Symphonie Cévanole* (a shorter and easier way of identifying the *Symphony on a French Mountain Air*) appears in its third and best sounding performance. The recording of the Franck *Symphonic Variations* is, believe it or not, the ninth version to be issued. What can one say about the ninth recording of anything? Ciccolini plays with plenty of verve and musicianship in both works, while Cluytens conducts in a four-square manner. He keeps the boys all together and seems to rest content having done that. Good sound here, too, and attractive packaging in both instances. W.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19. Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with The Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. One side, and **Beethoven: Coriolan Overture in C minor, Op. 62.** And **Beethoven: Die Weihe des Hauses—Overture, Op. 124.** Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5302) \$5.95.

Chopin: Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. One side, and **Chopin: Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21.** Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5308) \$5.95.

Paul Badura-Skoda has picked up quite a sizable following via records, and this release should enhance his standing even more. Beethoven's *Second* (although composed before the one called the *First*) Concerto is a work well suited to the style of Badura-Skoda, and he plays it superbly. The Mozartean characteristics so prevalent in the work and the truly Beethovenian utterings that foreshadow the Beethoven to come are realized with an admirable style that is served by a wholly adequate technique on the soloist's part. Scherchen and the orchestra provide a beauti-

fully molded accompaniment. They also offer sound readings of the *Coriolan Overture* and the *Consecration of the House Overture*. For those who want an all-Beethoven record, with the concerto complete on one side, this is it. Those who want two concertos, will find a good version by Kapell and Golschmann coupled with the Rachmaninoff *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (*V-LM-9026).

Westminster is offering an unusually good value in the coupling of both Chopin concertos (another pair with mixed up numbers—the second was written first and vice versa), and doubly so considering the excellence of the artists and the performances they render. We have not seen Artur Rodzinski's name on a major label (in new recordings) for quite some time. He provides a nicely adjusted accompaniment for both concertos, playing them with a nice firmness but without too much drive—which just is not in these orchestrations to begin with. Again, Badura-Skoda scores nicely with both works; this is the sort of music we think he does best. We just finished praising the Rubinstein recording of the No. 1, and just before that we liked the Gulda disc; but both of them offer only the No. 1 on a 12" disc, so there is much to recommend the present disc even beyond the good performance by Badura-Skoda. Considering the competition, which is formidable, on both concertos, we are forced to admit, nevertheless, that this disc is a good buy, and unless you are a rabid fan of one of the other performing artists, you will not do better than to get both Chopin concertos on one disc, played as beautifully as these are. S.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. David Oistrakh (violin) with the State Orchestra conducted by A. Gauk. One side, and **Glazounov: Concerto in A minor, Op. 82.** David Oistrakh (violin) with the State Orchestra conducted by K. Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-598) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 5 in A, K. 219 ("Turkish"). David Oistrakh (violin) with the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra conducted by Nicolai Golovanov. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 7 in D, K. 271.** David Oistrakh (violin) with the National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by K. Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*CSM-CRLP-154) \$5.45.

Not all of Oistrakh's performances have been convincing and appealing, and we were less than charitable in our opinion of his reading of the Beethoven *Violin Concerto* which appeared recently on the Concert Hall label—think nothing of it, dear reader, there is still a third LP by Oistrakh of this work on the Colosseum label—and all three are conducted by Gauk, but each of the three lists a different orchestra—and whether they are all the same performance or all different is more than we will take time to find out, for the whole situation is getting rather ridiculous. Anyhow, the disc at hand did not annoy us as did the Concert Hall version, so if it is the same recording, then we are in a different mood, and if

it is not the same recording, then we have perceptive ears. This disc differs in other respects, (besides suffering an unbearable intermodulation distortion) for it is spaced differently and includes the Glazounov *Concerto*, which is now in the LP catalogs in its third listing by Oistrakh on three different labels, all with the same conductor, but with different orchestras—oh, oh, this is where we came in.

Just today we were reading the opinions of a distinguished record reviewer in another publication, and his review of the two Mozart concertos listed above on the Colosseum disc came back immediately as we placed this disc on the machine. His succinct and accurate review is here quoted in its entirety: "Magnificent playing, lamentable sound." What more can we add? S.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 129. Pablo Casals (violoncello) conducting the Prades Festival Orchestra. One side, and **Encores.** Pablo Casals (violoncello) with Eugene Istomin (piano) and the Prades and Perpignan Festival Orchestras. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4926) \$5.95.

CONTENTS OF ENCORES: *Cant del Ocells* (vc. & Prades Orch.); *Sant Marti del Canigo* (Prades Orch.); *Aria* (from "Organ Pastorale in F") (Bach) (vc. & Perpignan Orch.); *Recitative* (from "Organ Concerto No. 3") (Bach—trans. Rosanoff) (vc. & pf.); *Adagio* (from "Sonata No. 9 in D") (Haydn) (vc. & pf.); *Nana* (from "7 Popular Spanish Songs") (Falla) (vc. & pf.).

The *A minor Piano Concerto*, unfortunately, overshadows the *A minor Cello Concerto* in popularity. Not that we begrudge the just admiration which the piano work receives; it's just that a lot of folks would relish this lovely *Cello Concerto* if they'd hear it. Another thing that works against the work for violoncello is the paucity of first rate 'cellists compared to the plethora of fine pianists, nearly all of whom have the *Piano Concerto* in their repertoire.

Be that as it may, here is the great Casals playing from the heart on this Schumann work . . . this disc clearly outclasses our previous favorite (TNR June '54). Of all the Concertos for Violoncello, two should be in every library: Schumann (in our opinion via the present disc) and Dvorák (via *WEST-WL-5225, TNR Jan. '54).

The obverse side of this disc is devoted mostly to short pieces showing off Casals' technique; there is nice variety here, and each is, in its way, worthwhile.

Walton: Concerto for Viola and Orchestra. William Primrose (viola) with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. One side, and **Hindemith: Concerto for Viola and Small Orchestra** ("Der Schwanendreher"). William Primrose (viola) with the Columbia Chamber Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4905) \$5.95.

"William Turner Walton (1902-), with Constant Lambert, represents the rising generation of

English composers. . . ." These words written in 1934 are taken from *Composers of Today*, compiled and edited by David Ewen; they were prophetic, for certainly Walton can be taken as representative of English composers today.

It is nice to welcome the *Viola Concerto* back to records; old time readers may recall the 78 rpm version by Frederick Riddle with the composer at the podium (TNR May '38). There is little or no opportunity for the soloist to shine in this concerto. It is symphonic in character, with the viola part stressed rather than placed out in front. The justly famous William Primrose properly sublimates himself to the work, and it may fairly be stated that he and Sir Malcolm have turned in a definitive performance of this important contemporary work.

Hindemith's first loves were the violin and the viola, and it would naturally be expected that he would lavish care in his compositions for those instruments. Such is indeed the case for the *Viola Concerto*, subtitled "Der Schwanendreher," or The Swan-Turner. An earlier recording (TNR Sept. '52) has been deleted from the catalogs, but the present version is much to be preferred on all counts.

Hindemith based *Der Schwanendreher* on folk melodies, and heightened the effect of the viola by scoring the work for no other strings than 'cellos and double basses. The three movements are entitled *Zwischen Berg un tiefem Tal* (15th cent. folk song); *Nun laube, Lindlein laube* (16th cent. folk song); and *Seid ihr nicht der Schwanendreher* (seven variations on a 17th cent. folk song).

Columbia is to be congratulated on making these two important viola concertos available in such superlative performances. J.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: (5) Sonatas for Violoncello and Piano.

Five sides, and **Beethoven: (7) Variations in E-flat on "Bei Männern"** by Mozart. And **Beethoven: (12) Variations in F on "Ein Mädchen"** by Mozart. Pablo Casals (violoncello) and Rudolf Serkin (piano). 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-201) \$17.85.

Brahms: (3) Sonatas for Violin and Piano. Three sides, and **Dietrich-Schumann-Brahms: F. A. E. Sonata for Violin and Piano** ("Frei aber einsam"). Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-202) \$11.90.

There is little we can say about the Columbia issue of the complete Beethoven *Cello Sonatas* by Casals and Serkin. This is, without a shadow of doubt, the definitive version; we should like to add "for all time," but we are through with prognosticating; one never knows what tomorrow will bring. But if you own the present Casals and Serkin set, you never need worry about future editions. Schwann's LP Catalog indicates these records to be available separately (at \$5.95 each): *Sonatas Nos. 1 & 5* on *C-ML-4876; *Sonata*

No. 2 and the two sets of *Variations* on *C-ML-4877; and *Sonatas* Nos. 3 & 4 on *C-ML-4878.

Stern and Zakin do a very fine job, indeed, on the Brahms' works, and are warmly recommended to those interested; they "back" into being our first choice by default—there are no other high fidelity recordings of these works.

The F. A. E. Sonata is interesting in that it was composed by three composers: Albert Dietrich, Robert Schumann and Brahms, each of whom wrote one movement, with Schumann adding a finale. We have listed the composers in the order of the movements that they wrote. The Sonata was dedicated to Joseph Joachim, their mutual friend, and it was entitled "Frei aber einsam" ("Free but lonely"); Joachim had previously adopted this as his motto. The notes F, A, and E are used prominently by Dietrich and Schumann, but not by Brahms.

CHORAL



Vivaldi: Gloria Mass. (Sung in Latin). Ensemble Vocal de Paris and l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts conducted by A. Jouve. One side, and **Charpentier: Midnight Mass.** (Sung in Latin). Ensemble Vocal de Paris conducted by A. Jouve. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5287) \$5.95.

One of the most exciting and spectacular recordings in the early days of LP was Vox's recording of the Vivaldi *Gloria*, sometimes referred to as the *Gloria Mass* (although it is not a Mass). Other considerations apart, its large dimensions preclude its being considered as a part of a Mass, so it is assumed that Vivaldi intended it for independent performance. In all events, it is a joyous work, full of Italian baroque spirit and thoroughly satisfactory from beginning to end. The edition used is Casella's, and he seems to have stuck pretty closely to the original MS., adding only such parts as were missing or were necessary for modern performance. The recording here has a spirit and a drive that are eminently suited to the music and text. André Jouve and his forces do very well, indeed, and the resultant performance is a brilliant one.

Music of a different order is Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Midnight Mass*. This fine French composer, so long only a name in text books and music histories, is becoming much better known, thanks to the activities of the Charpentier Society. The work here recorded is built on a succession of semi-popular (at his time, of course) carols. It is divided into the usual five sections and, although the notes do not so indicate, was probably arranged for modern performance. Whoever did it did a fine job, for the spirit of the time and the music has been preserved. M. Jouve's singers and orchestra are in fine fettle, and the results are most satisfying.

Westminster has supplied vigorous, if somewhat coarse, recording and the usual excellent notes and texts. W.

Verdi: Requiem. (Sung in Latin). Herva Nelli (soprano), Fedora Barbieri (mezzo-soprano), Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor), Cesare Siepi (bass), Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw, and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6018) \$11.90.

The long promised recording of Verdi's *Manzoni Requiem* as directed by Toscanini finally makes its appearance this month. The performance is that of January 27th, 1951, in Carnegie Hall, one that may be remembered by those who heard the broadcast. A quartet of the finest singers available (and they are good, too!) is used along with the usual Robert Shaw Chorale and the NBC Orchestra.

With all these splendid forces one would expect the last word in Verdi *Requiem*s, but no—something is very wrong. This writer is inclined to lay the blame squarely on Arturo Toscanini's shoulders. His conducting of this great religious work is hurried, eccentric and mannered. As is usual in most Toscanini performances everything is tightened up to such a degree that many portions of the score sound noisy and become trivial, something Verdi never intended. The best portion is the great *Dies Irae*, but even part of this falls woefully short of the effect that could have been made if Toscanini had allowed the music to play itself, as it were, rather than driving it so hard.

For the soloists there can be nothing but praise for a job superlatively done in the face of conditions that certainly mitigated against their singing naturally.

The recording, as might be expected from an "actual performance" deal, leaves something to be desired. It is uneven, soloists are in the background and the orchestra very much forward. It is considerably below RCA Victor's studio jobs or regular recording sessions in outside halls.

The packaging is very fine and includes a series of details from Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, comprehensive notes by George Marek and the text and translation. Except for the Toscanini enthusiast, those who want the Verdi *Requiem* are advised to wait a while longer, for certainly at the rate records are being issued, it won't be long before there is another and, possibly, better version. W.

Prokofiev: Alexander Nevsky, Op. 78. Vienna State Opera Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Mario Rossi, with Ana Maria Iriarte (mezzo-soprano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-451) \$5.95.

This second recording of Prokofiev's cantata *Alexander Nevsky* represents a considerable technical and, in the writer's opinion, quite an artistic advance over the earlier Columbia recording (TNR Nov. '45).

Particular interest centers around Mario Rossi, the gifted Italian conductor who makes his appearance, for the first time on records, in a capacity other than that of an operatic conductor. (There were a few recordings of early Italian music on Cetra, dubbed from 78's). This "debut" is an auspicious one. To

those who have heard, or own, his readings of *Fedora*, *Cenerentola* or *Guglielmo Tell* his grasp of music, his incisive beat and general musicianship will come as no surprise—those who have never heard his work are due for a surprise and a treat.

The score of *Alexander Nevsky* was derived from music Prokofiev wrote for the film of the same name that celebrated the exploits of Prince Alexander Nevsky in leading the Russian people to victory over the Teutonic invaders in the 13th century. The work is in seven sections (1) Russia Under the Mongolian Yoke, (2) Song about Alexander Nevsky, (3) The Crusaders in Pskov, (4) Arise Ye Russian People, (5) The Battle on Ice, (6) Field of the Dead, and (7) Alexander's Entry Into Pskov. Each section is descriptive and, as is so frequently the case with Prokofiev, of varying musical interest. Parts are melodious, others are rather noisy and discordant, but all is logical and coherent.

The Vienna State Opera Orchestra and Chorus do very well and the soloist, Ana Maria Iriarte, sings the moving lament of the woman seeking her loved ones among the dead and wounded, with taste and expressiveness. The recorded sound ranks with the best now being heard, which means it is very good indeed.

An English adaptation of the words, notes on the artists, Prokofiev and the music as well as pictures (including one of a handsome Mario Rossi) complete the offering, which can be highly recommended.

W.

Songs of Stephen Foster. Roger Wagner Chorale directed by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8267) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *My Old Kentucky Home*; *Oh, Susanna*; *Open Thy Lattice, Love*; *Beautiful Dreamer*; *Some Folks*; *De Camptown Races*; *Nelly Bly*; *Ring, Ring de Banjo*; *Kay Bell*; *Oh! Lemuel!*; *I Dream of Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair*; *Old Folks at Home*; *De Glendy Burke*; *Old Black Joe*.

We are certainly glad we don't have to predict what would make a good record before it is actually made; if anyone had come to us and said, "Would you like a record of Stephen Foster songs done by a chorus, a cappella?", we should have thought he had "flipped his lid," as they say in the streets. Yet we found ourself hating to leave this disc. These thrice-familiar songs are cleverly arranged and performed in a manner sure to please; and the words come through with superb clarity. You may not find this disc prominently displayed at your dealer's; but ask him for it—both you and he will be pleasantly surprised.

Byrd: Mass for Four Voices. One side, and **Byrd: Mass for Five Voices.** Soloists of the Pro Musica Antiqua directed by Safford Cape. 1-12" disc (*EMS-234) \$5.95.

William Byrd, one of England's greatest musicians, wrote three *Masses*: one for three voices or parts, one for four and one for five. In March 1951 the London

recording of the 4-part *Mass* on a ten inch LP disc was very favorably reviewed. Some few months later Allegro issued, on a twelve-inch disc, the 3- and 4-part *Masses*. Recently the Allegro disc was re-issued and, according to the Schwann catalog, it now contains the 4- and 5-part *Masses*. London has also re-issued its recording of the 4-part *Mass* and coupled it with the 5-part opus on a single twelve inch. Now comes EMS with a spanking new recording of the 4- and 5-part *Masses*.

Perhaps it would be simplest to state, at the outset, that this new EMS disc is an exceptionally fine example of (1) choral singing, (2) liturgical music and (3) recorded voices. Those having either of the previously mentioned recordings need not feel that their discs have been rendered obsolete; but those wishing to sample Byrd for the first time are advised to hear the EMS recording before coming to any conclusions.

Safford Cape and his Pro Musica Antiqua Ensemble come close to approaching perfection in these performances. Their expressiveness and vocal method are persuasive in the extreme. The group is a small one (soprano, contralto, two tenors and baritone) and, as their name indicates, specializes in medieval and renaissance music. The results of such specialization are apparent in these performances.

The recording is excellent, and scholarly notes have been supplied by Mr. Cape. The text of the *Mass* and some information as to William Byrd and the PMA Ensemble are also included.

W.

Stravinsky: Cantata (1952). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano); Hugues Cuenod (tenor); Members of the New York Concert Choir directed by Margaret Hillis; and the Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble conducted by Igor Stravinsky. One side, and **Stravinsky: Symphony in C (1940).** Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4899) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc, see under ORCHESTRA.



OPERA

Verdi: La Traviata (complete). (Sung in Italian).

Soloists, Cetra Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Radio Italiana (Turin) conducted by Gabriele Santini. 3-12" discs in box (*CE-C-1246) \$17.85.

Violetta.....Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Alfredo.....Francesco Albanese (t)
Giorgio.....Ugo Savarese (bt)

Considering the enormous popularity of Verdi's *La Traviata*, the opera has been singularly poorly served on records. An early recording on Columbia, a frantic version on Victor (directed by Toscanini) (TNR Nov. '51) plus several low priced jobs and, now, a none too satisfactory issue by Cetra-Capitol.

This most recent addition to the list features Maria Callas as the ill-starred Violetta and, while all the

wanted vocal splendor is in evidence, it is still not a convincing characterization to these ears. A certain lack of conviction—a hint of the routine—makes her portrayal something less than it could have been or, perhaps one should say, should have been. Due to her great potential, however, it is still the best this reviewer has heard on LP discs.

Tenor Albanese and Baritone Savarese are not in a class with Miss Callas, vocally speaking, and while both are acceptable, the performance does suffer from the use of the "star" system. A little too much musical weight in the title role and not enough elsewhere. The minor roles are sung by minor singers.

Gabriele Santini is no ball of fire as a conductor. He is certainly familiar with the score (every Italian worth his salt knows it backwards, forwards and sideways) yet it is a routine performance that emerges.

Recorded sound is only fair (surprising in view of Capitol's excellence in this respect with its domestic recordings) being sort of old-fashioned with its emphasis on the singer, thus relegating the orchestra to the background. The chorus usually sounds as though it were in another room. A complete libretto is included.

W.

Falla: La Vida Breve (complete). (Sung in Spanish).

Soloists, Capilla Clasica Polifonica and Orquesta Sinfonica de la Opera de Barcelona conducted by Ernesto Halffter. Three sides, and (10) **Spanish Songs**. Victoria de los Angeles (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano) or Claude Chaisson (harpichord). 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6017) \$11.90.

Salud.....Victoria de los Angeles (s)
Abuela.....Rosario Gomez (ms)
Paco.....Pablo Civil (t)
Uncle Sarvaor.....Emilio Paya (bt)
Carmela.....Josefina Puigsech (ms)

CONTENTS OF SONGS: *El Jilguero con Pico de Oro* (La Serna); *Cancion de Cuna* (Anon.); *Minue Cantado* (Bassa); *Seguidillas Religiosas* (Pla); *Cancion Picaresca* (Palomino); *Pano Murciano* (Trad.); *Farruca* (Turina); *Hablame de Amores* (Fuste); *El Retrato de Isabela* (Vives); *El Amor y los Ojos*.

For completely new operatic fare, the reader is referred to this sparkling and superbly recorded performance of Manuel de Falla's little known opera *La Vida Breve* ("The Short Life"). Since the work has never before been recorded in its entirety, a few words about the music and some vital statistics concerning it might not be out of order. *La Vida Breve* was written in 1905 for a competition sponsored by the Madrid Academy of Fine Arts. It won first prize, but no performances were guaranteed or forthcoming. As originally written it was a one act opera; but Falla, in trying to get it performed, rearranged it as a two act work in four scenes. Later, when Falla went to Paris, the score of *La Vida Breve* was in his luggage, and the *première* finally took place at Nice on 1 April 1913, and later the same year it was given at the

Opéra-Comique in Paris.

Basically *La Vida Breve* has a lot in common, libretto-wise, with *Cavalleria Rusticana* and other Italian *verismo* operas. It is, however, in a class by itself musically, being Spanish to its finger tips. Thus it is particularly fortunate that RCA Victor (or, more correctly, HMV) went right on location, as it were, to Barcelona (the Palacio de la Música); and there, with a Spanish cast (except for Pablo Civil, whom one suspects of being Paolo Civil, a pretty good Italian tenor of a few years ago), recorded it.

La Vida Breve is essentially the story of Salud, a little gypsy girl who is betrayed by a wealthy young man. As Salud, Victoria de los Angeles gives a performance that could scarcely be improved upon. There are never any questions of style, idiom or understanding; Miss de los Angeles is a past mistress of her art and is, in addition, Spanish. The only question one could raise, perhaps unfairly, is "would a little gypsy girl have such an aristocratic voice?". The other roles are small, but all are in capable hands—the atmosphere (very important in this work) is handsomely conveyed and all is enhanced by some of the cleanest, nicest sounding recording imaginable. A fine brochure with pictures of the artists, a Spanish-English libretto and notes on the work by the conductor are included. *La Vida Breve* is decidedly worth investigating on many counts, not the least of which is the fact that it contains much fine music.

Miss de los Angeles' song recital on the fourth side is an added dividend. Needless to say, the songs are all exquisitely sung.

W.

R. Strauss: Salome (complete). (Sung in German).

Soloists and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-1038/9) \$11.90.

Salome.....Christel Goltz (s)
Herod.....Julius Patzak (t)
Herodias.....Margareta Kenney (ms)
Jokanaan.....Hans Braun (bt)
Narraboth.....Anton Dermota (t)

This, the third complete *Salome*, should see an end to recordings of the opera for a while. It was in February 1951 that these columns carried a notice of the Oceanic set; one, incidentally, that also had Christel Goltz in the title role. Earlier this year (TNR April '54) the newer Columbia was reviewed, in the main favorably.

The current set tops its predecessors, both as to sound and casting. Christel Goltz's *Salome* is, if anything, better than it was some three years ago on the Oceanic set—or maybe it's just better and more exciting sound. The use of two tenors of the calibre of Patzak and Dermota is praiseworthy, and the results are excellent. Hans Braun is a fine Jokanaan, and Margaret Kenney is a first-class Herodias—each possesses a fine voice that is used with intelligence and feeling.

One realizes, while listening to this recording, how much music lost with the sudden death of Clemens Krauss in Mexico City earlier this year. These are

stated to have been his last recordings and the fact is a saddening one, mitigated only by the knowledge that he did make quite a few records that can be heard at will. One needs only note that his reading of Strauss' score, as recorded here, is an impassioned one.

The present *Salome*, then, may be considered superior on all counts to the two others. Those who have been patient are now rewarded—the impatient ones either must be satisfied with what they have (incidentally, to be fair one must admit that neither of the other sets is poor—it's only that this one is so much better) or add this new one to their libraries. A libretto is included. W.

A Wagner Program. Otto Edelmann (bass) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3052) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Die Meistersinger*—Flüdermonolog, Wahnmonolog, Schusterlied, Euch macht ihr's leicht, Verachtet mir die Meister nicht; *Tannhäuser*—Wie Todesahnung (recit.) & O Du, mein holder Abendstern (aria); *The Flying Dutchman*—Die Frist is um; *Parsifal*—Nein! Lasst ihn unenthüllt; *Tannhäuser*—Blück ich umher.

This disc is enough to break a critic's heart. It is a fine disc, with great music, sung well, with good balance and reproduction. Yet it probably won't sell well: first, because it's Wagner (and Italian opera is far more popular); and second, because it contains arias for a bass (tenors are the things). How many famous basses can you name? Mardones, Baccaloni, Chaliapin, Journet, Plançon, Pinza and possibly Christoff. And how many tenors?

So we feel like the priest who blesses the man who is being hanged in the morning; it's a good disc.

VOCAL



Neapolitan Songs. Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*HMV-BLP-1034) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Torna a Surriento* (de Curtis); *Senza Nisciuno* (de Curtis); *Carmela* (de Curtis); *'A Canzone 'e Napule* (de Curtis); *Santa Lucia* (Cottrau); *Lucia, Luci* (de Curtis); *O Sole Mio* (di Capua); *Addio a Napoli* (Cottrau).

Neapolitan Songs. Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*HMV-BLP-1052) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *O Sole Mio* (di Capua); *Marechiaro* (Tosti); *Core 'ngrato* (Cardillo); *Torna a Surriento* (de Curtis); *Dicitencello vuje* (Falvo); *Tu, ca nun Chiagne!* (de Curtis); *Santa Lucia Luntana* (Mario); *I' te Vurria Vasa!* (di Capua).

It is only via the phonograph that such a fascinating comparison could be made between two tenors a generation apart. Beniamino Gigli, born in 1890, has long been regarded, particularly since the death of Caruso, as the prince of Italian tenors (it will surprise no one to learn that this reviewer holds other views.

He feels that Martinelli was not only the great Caruso's peer vocally but his superior artistically).

Now there is the young Italian, Giuseppe di Stefano, born in 1921, about a month before Caruso died, to be reckoned with; and, chary as one is about invoking the ghosts of past greats, di Stefano need not bow to any of his long list of illustrious predecessors.

These two sterling tenors, then, are both represented here by a group of Neapolitan (?) songs and, to further the ease of comparison, there are two duplications: *O sole mio* and *Torna a Surriento*. As might be expected, the approaches are very different. Gigli is content to let his obviously beautiful voice carry the burden, giving little expression outside of a sob or two. In other words, Gigli is unable to escape from the consequences of his magnificent voice.

Giuseppe di Stefano, on the other hand, has, in this reviewer's opinion, every bit as fine a voice and a big plus in artistic intelligence and musicianship. He sings these songs in a manner that virtually raises them to the level of "art songs" (and a few of them are, incidentally) and the results are not only astonishing, they are good music. There is another startling difference: namely, that of the orchestral arrangement of the accompaniments. Those di Stefano uses are little works of art—no simple playing of the tune in plain harmonies but rather complicated obbligati. One wonders whether Sgr. di Stefano had anything to do with them, for one has encountered this sort of thing in other records he has made.

Finally, there is the wealth of expression di Stefano pours into each song. Every word is clearly enunciated and given its proper emphasis. In a popular song such as *Core 'ngrato* he "pours it on" to an amazing degree, and the result stirred this listener to a considerable extent; in fact, he fell to wondering, since he is of Norwegian parentage, just what effect it would have on an Italian!

Both discs, one presumes, are transfers from 78 rpm masters, although the jacket notes make no reference to it. Some of the Gigli items certainly date from the late 1920's (*Addio a Napoli*) and the early 30's (*Lucia, Luci* and *'A canzone 'e Napule*), while all of di Stefano's are, of course, post World War II. The transfer has, in all cases, been astonishingly successful. Sparse notes are supplied.

Certainly both discs belong in any collection of vocal records not having representative work of either of these artists—the di Stefano disc belongs in every collection. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 51 ("Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 202** ("Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten"). (Sung in German). Suzanne Danco (soprano) with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger, with Paolo Longinotti (trumpet), Werner Krotzinger (violin), Fritz Fischer (oboe) and Germaine Vaucher-Clerc (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-993) \$5.95.

While listening to this record the writer was struck

by the perhaps obvious fact that he was listening to the music of an age (or better, a type of thinking) that seems to be lost forever. This applies particularly to the *Cantata No. 51* which is a wonderful hymn of praise to the Almighty by a man to whom God meant something. One realizes that comparisons are very often foolish, almost stupid things, yet if one is to have standards, comparison is inevitable, particularly insofar as the arts are concerned, for here there is no musical equivalent of the galvanometer or spectrograph, by which the quality of either the music or the performance may be evaluated or analyzed. Thus, when one remarks that there has been very little music written in the last fifty years that came from the pens of men who were "complete"—that is men who were at home in both their physical and spiritual worlds, perhaps the reader will excuse some of the odious comparisons the writer has been making mentally.

Now to consider the performances and music at hand. It can be stated simply, at the outset, that both are very fine. Miss Danco, in whom one is a bit surprised to find such an obvious enthusiasm for Bach (but after all, why not? She has demonstrated a sound musicianship before) sings with a purity of tone and an expressiveness that could well be the envy of many other singers performing today. Karl Munchinger is favorably known from previous Bach recordings and, along with his soloists (especially trumpeter Paolo Longinotti) and the orchestra does a superior job. Both cantatas are to be numbered among Bach's finest efforts and, although each has been recorded before, the present disc outshines all its predecessors. The recorded sound is good but on the loud side. The *Cantata No. 202* had a bad spot near the beginning that may have been due, in all fairness, to a faulty pressing. Texts and translations are supplied. W.

Noel & Gertie. Noel Coward and Gertrude Lawrence, with Yvonne Printemps. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1156) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Private Lives*—Love Scene (Act I) & Scene (Act II); *Shadow Play*—Then Play Orchestra Play, You Were There; *Red Peppers*—Has Anybody Seen Our Ship, Men About Town; *Conversation Piece*—I'll Follow My Secret Heart; *Bitter Sweet*—Zigeuner; *Mrs. Worthington*; *Cochran's 1931 Revue*—Half-Caste Woman; *Parisian Pierrot*; *Bitter Sweet*—I'll See You Again; *Words and Music*—*Mad Dogs and Englishmen*.

Noel Coward was thirteen and Gertrude Lawrence a year older when they met for the first time. "She gave me an orange," Mr. Coward recalls in his autobiography, "and told me a few mildly dirty stories, and I loved her from then onwards."

There'll be lots of enjoyment here for anyone who admires the great Noel Coward and Gertrude Lawrence (Miss Lawrence is only on side one; side two is Coward solo, except for *I'll Follow My Secret Heart*, with Yvonne Printemps). The best known work on

the disc is, we'll wager, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*, which is worth the price of the whole disc to us.

NOTE: All of the numbers on this LP disc were recorded between 1929 and 1938; the reproduction, therefore, is not up to today's standards.

Anna Russell's Guide to Concert Audiences. Anna Russell (comédienne) accompanied by Eugene Rankin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4928) \$5.95.

More of Miss Russell's pointed jibes at concert audiences, which jibes we happen to think very, very funny. These jests will mean absolutely nothing to the non-music lover, and we realize that we're really laughing at ourself; but we hope we never lose this ability. "Du bist ein schmoe," says la Russell; we guess we are, at that.

Just as good, if not better, than *Anna Russell Sings?* (TNR Dec. '52) and *Anna Russell Sings! Again?* (TNR Oct. '53).

Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin. (Sung in German).

Peter Munteanu (tenor) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5291) \$5.95.

While Schubert's song-cycle *Die schöne Müllerin* offers untold opportunities for the singer, there is probably no other music that requires so much knowledge of pure singing, that calls for so much ability to sing expressively (many of the songs are strophic) as does this group of songs. It is not surprising, then, to find that of the four various recordings of this popular music, only one is more than passable, that by Walter Ludwig, on Decca (*D-DL-9648).

This most recent addition to the lists can not be accounted a success for several reasons. First, Munteanu does not grasp, or is unable to project, the mood of the music—this could be either a lack of understanding or an inability to convey ideas by means of voice (a round about way of saying that perhaps the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak). Another factor that upset this reviewer, and here one treads on the dangerous ground of personal taste, was the girlish tenor employed by the soloist. Actually, there were times when Munteanu sounded positively "cute"—and *Die schöne Müllerin* is never cute.

Westminster has supplied complete texts, notes and good recording. Because of the soloist, however, as one may readily gather, the music never gets a chance. The writer remembers, only too well, Gerhard Hüsch's superb singing of the music and, insofar as present singers are concerned, there is only one who could come close to doing justice to this exquisite and moving music—Gérard Souzay. How about it, London? W.

Song Recital. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35023TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35023) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Bist du bei mir* (Bach); *Einen Bach*

der fließt (Gluck); *Abendempfindung*, *Der Zauberer* (Mozart); *Wonne der Wehmut* (Beethoven); *Litanei*, *Ungeduld* (Schubert); *Der Nussbaum*, *Aufträge* (Schumann); *Da unten im Tale*, *Och Modr ich well en Ding han!*, *Vergebliches Ständchen* (Brahms); *Wiegenlied*, *Mausfallen-Sprüchlein* (Wolf); *Hat gesagt—bleibt's nicht dabei*, *Schlechtes Wetter* (R. Strauss).

These miscellaneous song recitals that are being issued with such regularity must find favor with a considerable portion of the record buying public; so the writer, in stating that, as a rule, he doesn't like them, realizes he is in a minority. His reasons, for those interested, are simple enough. When one goes to a *lieder* recital one hears it, and that is that; but on a record one listens, willy-nilly to the same program each time. Now in the case of a particular singer who happens to be one's favorite, the foregoing can very well be forgotten. Thus, for those particularly partial to Elisabeth Schwarzkopf this record will be a real treat, for she sings her way through a wide variety of *lieder* in a manner that calls for the highest praise. From Bach, Mozart and Beethoven to Wolf and Strauss she handles her musical material and poetical subject matter with finesse and distinction.

The disc is a combination of the familiar and the lesser known, the great and the not so great. Among the outstanding *lieder*, musically, are Bach's *Bist du bei mir*, the two Mozart songs and Schubert's *Litanei*. Miss Schwarzkopf is least successful in Schubert's *Ungeduld* (a very difficult song, by the way) where she is inclined to become a little "whoopsie."

Considered in its entirety, however, the disc is genuine evidence of Miss Schwarzkopf's great gifts and, as such, can be unreservedly recommended. Angel has packaged the record in its usual fine style and has also supplied texts, translations and short but pertinent commentaries by Alec Robertson. W.

Bartók: Songs, Op. 16, Nos. 1-5. One side, and **Bartók: (14) Hungarian Folk Songs.** Magda Laszlo (soprano) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5283) \$5.95.

Probably no other modern composer, with the possible exception of Sibelius (due to the activities of the Sibelius Society in the middle and late thirties), has received so much recorded attention as the late Béla Bartók. This sampling of his songs fills in a gap in the recorded repertoire and permits those interested (and there are many) to examine this facet of the composer's genius.

Miss Laszlo sings all the songs with obvious feeling and proper attention to detail. Magda Laszlo needs no introduction to record collectors—her clear, cool and perfectly handled soprano has been heard to advantage in numerous Westminster recordings.

The songs included on this disc are the five comprising Opus 16. Next come five of the *Eight Hungarian Folk Songs* dating from 1929. There follow

four of the *Twenty Hungarian Folk Songs*, Bartók's last published group of transcriptions. A little dividend, in the form of five folk songs identified only as "from a larger collection," conclude the second side. These last songs are not even mentioned in the somewhat confused notes that are printed on the jacket.

The recording is fine, and the disc can be warmly recommended to Bartók enthusiasts. Tyros are advised to hear the record first, for Bartók's idiom is at once characteristic and difficult; it is an acquired taste. Text and translation of all the songs but the last five are included. W.

Britten: Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Op.

31. Peter Pears (tenor) and Dennis Brain (horn) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. One side, and **Britten: Les Illuminations for Tenor Solo and Strings, Op. 18.** Peter Pears (tenor) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-994) \$5.95.

Britten wrote *Les Illuminations* during the years he spent in America (1939-1942), completing the cycle in Amityville, N. Y. in October, 1939. The first performance was in London in January, 1940. The *Serenade* was composed in 1943 in England, and was first performed by Peter Pears and Dennis Brain (the artists for whom it was written) in October 1943.

Les Illuminations and *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo* found Britten turning away from his native language and indulging in two European "stylizations." Britten has done a remarkably fine work in setting the eccentric poems of Rimbaud to music, for he has caught a Gallic quality and translated it to music with great effectiveness, using only a string orchestra with the solo voice. We find this work far more enjoyable than the *Serenade*, possibly because of its immediate appeal: it is a much more accessible work with a more melodic character.

The cleverly devised music for the *Serenade* is, of course, a setting for English poetry (Cotton, Tennyson, Blake, Ben Jonson, Keats), and the writing for horn is a difficult assignment, to put it mildly. The performing artists are well versed in this music, having recorded it previously and having performed it numerous times. Peter Pears handles his task well, and offers perfect diction, which London's engineers have captured beautifully. Goossens has an appropriate feeling for the score, which the strings of the New Symphony play with fine finish. There is no denying the atmosphere created by the music, which is splendidly realized by all concerned. S.

Faure: La Chanson d'Eve, Op. 95. One side, and **Milhaud: (8) Poèmes Juifs.** Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by André Collard (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-919) \$5.95.

It is not easy to figure out what is in the minds of recording companies. Take the present disc as an

example—here is music put on records for the first time and yet, except for some general background notes, excellent insofar as they go, no texts or any detailed information is furnished. This is especially serious in the case of the Fauré cycle, a setting of ten poems by the Belgian mystic van Leberghe. The notes hint at the poet's "difficult feat . . . of writing poetry which treats of a divine Presence in all created things . . ." but the poems themselves with a suitable translation are not in evidence. *La Chanson d'Ève*, as sung by Irma Kolassi, is music that matches the poetry—it is evocative, twilight and sombre. Certainly it is not popular music, but it is music for the specialist, for those interested in the minor masterpieces of French musical literature.

Darius Milhaud's *Poèmes Juifs* date from 1916. Here again the notes hint at interesting details that are not given. Each song is supposed to have been dedicated to a Jewish friend or relative of Milhaud's, but further information is withheld as are the texts. This is less accessible music than the Fauré, more acrid, bitter and dissonant. It is "bitonal" music, each hand playing in a different key, the voice being guided now by one, now by the other. Here again one does not have popular music; rather it is disconcerting music and the absence of any information as to what Milhaud was trying to do makes it almost impossible to understand.

Miss Kolassi's voice is of fine quality and timbre, and she handles this difficult assignment with taste and aplomb. André Collard is an able accompanist. Good sound. W.

PIANO



Debussy: Suite Bergamasque. One side, and **Debussy: The Children's Corner.** Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35067TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35067) \$5.95.

Debussy: Estampes. One-half side, and **Debussy: Preludes, Books I & II.** Reine Gianoli (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-214) \$11.90.

Gieseking offers the same coupling on *C-ML-4539 as he does on the present Angel disc, so one would save \$1 by purchasing the Angel "Thrifty Pack" or he would get a factory-sealed disc at the same price as Columbia's. Angel is, therefore, clearly the choice here.

The demand for Debussy's piano music must be a bottomless pit, judging by the number of offerings of each of the Frenchman's works. One can, accordingly, be choosy about which performance he selects. Miss Gianoli is obviously sympathetic towards her work; but for us only Gieseking can make these pieces "permanent." We never tire of hearing him play Debussy.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53** ("Waldstein"). Sascha Gorodnitzki (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8264) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 ("Moonlight"). And **Beethoven: Sonata in C minor, Op. 13** ("Pathétique"). And **Beethoven: Sonata in F minor, Op. 57** ("Appassionata"). Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5184) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 31 in A-flat, Op. 110.** Myra Hess (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1068) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"). And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 25 in G, Op. 79.** One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 15 in D, Op. 28** ("Pastorale"). And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 26 in E-flat, Op. 81a** ("Les Adieux"). Orazio Frugoni (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8650) \$5.95.

We are pleased to say that Sascha Gorodnitzki's performances on the present Capitol disc are a big improvement over his initial recorded efforts (see TNR Jan. '54). Badura-Skoda and Frugoni acquit themselves well on their discs, but Myra Hess . . . something is wrong here. The reproduction is very muddy and fuzzy, and Mme. Hess's touch is quite too delicate for Beethoven; we don't know how this disc ever got past the engineers.

Schubert: Sonata in D, Op. 33. Webster Aitken (piano). 1-12" disc (*EMS-108) \$5.95.

Schubert: Sonata in G, Op. 78. Webster Aitken (piano). 1-12" disc (*EMS-109) \$5.95.

These two discs are labelled "Vol. 8" and "Vol. 9," respectively, of the complete piano works of Schubert series, played by Webster Aitken. We don't know what EMS means by this; there are not nine volumes available. *EMS-110 was reviewed in our August '51 issue (*Sonata No. 13 in C minor*); the *Sonatas in A and B-flat* (*EMS-111 & 112, respectively) were issued slightly later, but somehow escaped our notice. Our reviewer, "S," has complained about publishers' numbering symphonies by publication date, rather than by date of composition; we'd like to enter a complaint against manufacturers who bring out *Volumes 8 & 9*, when only five volumes are available.

Oh, yes; Mr. Aitken's playing is quite satisfactory. It will be nice to have the complete piano works of Schubert by one artist; we hope we live to achieve it.

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9. One side, and **Franck: Prelude, Chorale and Fugue.** Artur Schnabel (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1822) \$5.95.

There are adequate recordings of both of these

works in the catalogs already—more than we think the works rate — so unless this particular coupling intrigues you, we cannot see why it was issued. This is not to imply, however, that the always reliable Rubinstein does not turn in impeccable performances.

ORGAN



Christmas Organ Music. Fritz Heitmann, playing the organ of the Ernst Moritz Church, Berlin-Zehlendorf. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66009) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (3) *Chorale Preludes* ("Vom Himmel hoch, da komm' ich her;" "In dulci jubilo;" "Lobt Gott, ihr Christen, allzugleich"); *Pastorale in F*; *Canonic Variations* on "Vom Himmel hoch, da komm' ich her;" *Fantasia in G* (Bach). *Variations on "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ"* (Böhm). *Variations on "Lobt Gott, ihr Christen, allzugleich"* (Walther). *Fantasia on "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"* (Buxtehude).

Christmas Carols on the Organ. Virgil Fox (organ). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1845) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*; *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*; *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*; *Gesu Bambino*; *We Three Kings*; *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*; *Angels We Have Heard on High*; *Angels from the Realms of Glory*; *Joy to the World*; *The Snow Lay on the Ground*; *I Know a Rose-tree Springing*; *The First Noël*; *Oh Little Town of Bethlehem*; *Away in a Manger*; *Silent Night*; *Christmas* (Variations on "O Come, All Ye Faithful").

These two discs are quite dissimilar, the one being Christmas music and the other being Christmas carols. Actually the music played by Herr Heitmann will not suggest Christmas to most persons; it consists of liturgical music (mostly from the Lutheran Church). The fidelity of this disc leaves much to be desired, and as there is nothing special about the compositions or the artistry we cannot recommend the disc.

Virgil Fox plays 16 familiar carols on a church organ, and very well, too. If you have no musicians in the family, but the family likes to sing, you might put this disc on your phonograph Christmas Eve and get the family to join in.

Franck: (3) Chorals. And Franck: Pièce Héroïque. Feike Asma, playing the organ in the Old Church (Amsterdam). 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3051) \$5.95.

This disc gives the organ lover his money's worth in more ways than one. This is the first time all three of the great Franck organ Chorals plus the *Pièce Héroïque* have ever been placed on one disc, resulting in a collection of logic and value. The three organ Chorals of Franck are not based on church hymns, as are the Chorals of Bach. They are original inspirations, freely developed in the variation form. Like most of the music of Franck's time, organ music was usually superficial in nature; Franck took organ music

and gave it a beauty and dignity that stand to this day as a landmark. This great master of improvisation turned out three organ *Chorals* which for melodic beauty and harmonic loveliness never cease to gladden the hearts of those who hear them. There are moments in the first and third Chorals in which a seemingly divine inspiration resulted in melody of exceptional beauty, clothed in harmony of exquisite chromatic coloring, which carry the listener completely away with the progress of the music.

Feike Asma plays these Chorals magnificently, with a firm regard for the traditions, but with a generous amount of personal inspiration and feeling that are most becoming and never obtrusive. Beyond the necessary technique, this man has taste and style, and the ability to play these works with warmth and conviction. The same can be said for his sterling reading of the *Pièce Héroïque*. The organ of the Old Church in Amsterdam is a good, old world type of cathedral organ with an exceptional amount of richness and romantic warmth, as well as staggering brilliance and power. It is not, to our ears, a thin baroque squeaker. Epic has managed more decibels of power and volume in these grooves than we ever thought possible (in the loud passages, of course), and at the same time they have preserved beauty in the solo passages and softer combinations—and with a perspective that gives the feeling of space. Whether or not your phonograph can take the heavy sections is something you will have to find out—if it can, you have a treat in store for you. S.



HARPSICHORD

Spanish Keyboard Music. Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5312) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonata in D* (Albeniz); *Adagietto in B-flat* (Anglés); *Sonata in F* (Casanovas); *Sonata in F minor* (Gallés); *Sonata in A* (Freixanet); *Sonata in B-flat* (Gallés); *Sonata in F* (Anglés); *Rondo in B-flat* (Rodriguez); *Sonata in C minor* (Cantallos); *Sonata in B-flat* (Serrano); *Aria in D minor* (Anglés); *Sonata in C minor* (Fernandez).

To the many admirers of Mr. Valenti's art we need only state that here is another disc displaying his virtuoso talents, devoted to Spanish composers. The selection of pieces offers nice variety, and the disc must be accounted a success.

Bach: Das wohltemperierte Clavier (Bk. II, Preludes and Fugues Nos. 17-24). Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1820) \$5.95.

This completes the cycle of 48 Preludes and Fugues comprising *Das wohltemperierte Clavier* by Wanda Landowska. The first five volumes were reviewed in the following issues of THE NEW RECORDS: Feb. '50, Feb. '51, June '51, Mar. '52 and Feb. '53. Collectors will surely feel it was worth the four and a half years wait to have this whole work by the one and only Landowska.

VIOLIN



Dohnányi: Rurality Hungarica. One side, and **Paganini: Caprice No. 13 in B-flat.** And **Paganini: Caprice No. 20 in D.** And **Paganini: Concerto No. 2 in B minor, Op. 70—Rondo ("La Campanella").** Alfredo Campoli (violin) accompanied by George Malcolm (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-793) \$4.95.

A Paganini Recital. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) accompanied by Louis Persinger (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1005) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Le Streghe, Op. 8; Fantasia on the G string; Moto Perpetuo, Op. 11; Variations on "Nel cor piu non mi sento;" Variations on "God Save the Queen," Op. 9; Violin Concerto No. 2 in B minor, Op. 70—Rondo ("La Campanella"); Sonata No. 12 in E minor, Op. 3, No. 6; I Palpiti, Op. 13.*

A Sarasate Recital. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) accompanied by Louis Persinger (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-962) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Malagueña, Op. 21, No. 1; Habanera, Op. 21, No. 2; Romanza Andaluza, Op. 22, No. 1; Jota Navarra, Op. 22, No. 2; Playera, Op. 23, No. 1; Zapateado, Op. 23, No. 2; Danza Española No. 7, Op. 26, No. 1; Danza Española No. 8, Op. 26, No. 2; Caprice Basque, Op. 24; Introduction and Tarantella, Op. 43; Zigeunerweisen, Op. 20, No. 1.*

There are probably not two finer violinists playing today, at least in music of this character, than Campoli and Ricci; so if you're interested in these technical gymnastics for the violin, here is fiery fiddling with reproduction to match.



DICTION

Shakespeare: A Midsummer Night's Dream (complete). Moira Shearer, Robert Helpmann, Stanley Holloway and supporting cast from the 1954 Old Vic Production, with the full Mendelssohn score by the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6115) \$17.85.

We were most regretful that we did not get to see the Old Vic production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* while it was in Philadelphia; it was here only three nights, which were all sold out well in advance, plus one matinee which was decided upon at the last minute in the hopes of satisfying those who could not get tickets for the evening shows.

Judging from these records, the stage show must be wonderful! RCA Victor has captured the voices and the spirit with rare fidelity, and we have no doubt that this album will be a treasured memento to those who have seen the stage production.

Although Mendelssohn's music is beautiful, it may be that it will annoy some who are primarily interested in the play. No doubt there was some stage business

going on while the music was playing in the theatre; but one can't see that on records, and it seems to interrupt things somewhat. This is a minor criticism; we rather feel that we should not have left it off the records, had we been RCA Victor.

Unless you know the play by heart, you'll be well advised to hear it with a text before you, if only to learn who is speaking. You will find few cuts; and the fairies will flit, the mixed-up lovers will chase each other, and the tradesmen-actors will make you laugh. All in all, a most successful recording from every aspect.

J.



MISCELLANEOUS

American Storytellers (Vol. I). 1-12" disc (*SOT-5001) \$4.80. (MF).

CONTENTS: Cribbage board conversations with old time sailing skippers (Gloucester, Mass.); the story of *Long Barney* and other tales by Harry Wass (So. Addison, Me.).

A Dead-Beat Guitar and the Mississippi Blues. K. C. Douglas (vocals and guitar). 1-12" disc (*SOT-5002) \$4.80. (MF).

Caribean. Hidden music from the Caribbean collected from the shores and islands. 1-12" disc (*SOT-5003) \$4.80. (HF).

"The Best Drummer in Haiti." Tiroro (drum). 1-12" disc (*SOT-5004) \$4.80. (LF).

Camp Has a Ball. Red Camp (piano) and his band. 1-12" disc (*SOT-5005) \$4.80. (HF).

Square Dance. Al Brundage (caller) and his band. 1-12" disc (*SOT-5006) \$4.80. (MF).

CONTENTS: *Wabash Cannon Ball* (calls); *Texas Stars* (calls); *Flop Eared Mule*; *Chinese Breakdown*; *Give the Fiddler a Dram*; *Mountain Rag*; *Duck 'n Dive* (calls); *Wagoner*; *Wagon Wheel Around* (calls); *Old Joe Clark*.

Marimba Band (or, *To Hell with High Fidelity*). 1-12" disc (*SOT-5007) \$4.80. (HF).

CONTENTS: *Las Chiapanecas*; *La Sandunga*; *La Tonalteca*; *Dios Nunca Muere*; *El Cachito*; *La Llorona*; *Cielito Lindo*; *La Juanita*.

American Storytellers (Vol. II). John Hawley Cook (narrator). 1-12" disc (*SOT-5008) \$4.80. (MF).

American Storytellers (Vol. III). Stories of whaling and shipwreck. 1-12" disc (*SOT-5009) \$4.80. (MF).

Calliope and Carousel. 1-12" disc (*SOT-5010) \$4.80. (HF).

Here are the "Road Recordings" issued by Emory Cook's Sounds of Our Times. A new departure will be noted in that Mr. Cook labels the discs as "High Fidelity," "Medium Fidelity," and "Low Fidelity" (indicated in the headings above by HF, MF or LF).

Cook explains: "MF and LF releases may be the result of field work with a spring-wound machine or 7 1/2"/second tape originals or non-condenser-microphone work . . ." Obviously much of the material recorded above could never have been brought to the studio; thus, Cook and safari went "on the road" to get the Road Recordings.

A detailed review of each of the above discs would be impossible in the space allotted, and Mr. Cook has come to our rescue by making available a brochure describing them with candid accuracy, even to the extent of warning the reader that he probably won't want a particular disc. Copies of this folder may be obtained from the publisher of this bulletin gratis; just drop us a card requesting the catalog of the "Road Recordings."

Spanish Music for Guitar. Narciso Yépès (guitar). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1042) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (2) *Pavans* (Milan); *Folia* (Sanz); (2) *Minuets* (Sor); *Rondo* (Sor); *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* (Tarrega); *Alborada—Little Musical Box* (Tarrega); *Leyenda* (Albéniz); *Malaguena—Rumores de la Caleta* (Albéniz); *Danza Espanola No. 10* (Granados); *Homenaje: Pour le Tombeau de Debussy* (Fallá); *Fandanguillo* (Turina); (2) *Levantines* (Esplá); *Melodia* (Torroba); *En los Trigales* (Rodrigo).

Guitar Recital. Luise Walker (guitar). 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3055) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Concertino for Guitar and Orchestra* (with the Vienna Symphony Orch., conducted by Paul Sacher) (Santorsola); *Variations on a Theme of Mozart, Op. 9* (Sor); *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* (Tarrega); *Praeludium a la Antiqua* (Santorsola); *Variations on a Spanish Song* (Walker); *Leonesa* (Illobet); *Suite No. 1* (Ambrosius); *Little Variations on a French Air* (Sor); *Granada* (from "Suite espagnola No. 1") (Albéniz).

No doubt the popularity of Andres Segovia and his records have sent other manufacturers scurrying for competition; and this month finds both London and Epic offering recitals of Spanish music for the guitar.

What annoys us not a little is the complete lack of biographical data on either artist. The jacket notes on each disc go into the background of the guitar and describe the music. But who are Narciso Yépès and Luise Walker? Both seem extremely competent, but one would like to know whence they came, their age and previous experience. One can look up a history of the guitar in any encyclopedia.

At any rate, Mr. Segovia need have no fear of being pushed off the stage, although the present artists are in every way satisfactory.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—PolyMusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 () indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PAGE 16

Berbig - Te Deum
p. 8

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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"The World's Record Shop"

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NOTHING IS QUITE so exciting to a serious record collector as a Limited Edition. The knowledge that one is making a purchase of an article destined to become both rare and highly sought after seems to whet the appetite of the collector; and one of the pleasures of the critic is being on the "inside," so to speak, and thus to be able to announce such a Limited Edition to the record buying public.

Angel Records has announced the limited edition of the complete piano works of Mozart, played by Walter Gieseking, probably the outstanding interpreter of Mozart today. Consisting of eleven 12-inch LP discs housed in a royal blue moiré silk dustproof case, stamped in gold-leaf, and accompanied by a handsomely illustrated booklet containing an introduction written by Gieseking and notes on the 63 works by the English Critic, William Glock, the set is offered by subscription at \$75.

The sample record sent to the reviewers indicates that one will not be disappointed with this set; we understand that the dealer will also have this demonstration disc so you can sample the set for yourself. As are all Angel surfaces, these are glassy-smooth; the great Gieseking, apparently realizing the milestone he is achieving, is dedicated to his task. The happy results will surely make this series of discs the recordings of Mozart piano music, by which all others must be judged.

The publisher of this bulletin is accepting subscriptions for this Limited Edition; if you are interested, we suggest that you reserve yours without delay. The price includes postage to any point in U. S. A.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-two

years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning December 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Giordano: *Andrea Chenier* (highlights). Tebaldi, Soler with chorus and Orchestra of Radio Italiana—Basile. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50169) \$5.95. (TNR Jan. '54).

Verdi: *La Traviata* (highlights). Callas, Albanese, Savarese with chorus and Orchestra of Radio Italiana—Santini. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50167) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '54).

Verdi: *Don Carlo* (highlights). Caniglia, Stignani, Picchi, Silveri, Rossi-Lemeni with chorus and Orchestra of Radio Italiana—Previtali. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50168) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '52).

Moussorgsky: *Boris Godounov* (excerpts). Alexander Kipnis (bass), soloists, RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra and Chorus—Berezowsky. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1082) \$2.98. (TNR June '45).

ORCHESTRA



Holst: *The Planets, Op. 32*. London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of Female Voices conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1019) \$5.95.

While Holst himself never considered *The Planets* one of his best works, the public has taken to it and kept it in the repertoire for the forty years since its composition. The work has a tremendous individuality and uniqueness which seems not to lose its appeal, for often such music is a novelty at first and then soon is forgotten. *The Planets*, apparently, is destined to live on and entertain audiences with its pictorial descriptions of Mars, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Possibly the fact that Holst chose planets as the subject of his musical picture painting has helped to fasten interest in the work, for planets are a subject of endless fascination

for all of us, particularly with the mythology connected with them. The music itself is deserving of a decent place in the repertoire, for it was not only original for its day but is of such genuine originality that it retains its freshness decades later. Holst fashioned music of such plausible description that one can easily accept the planet he sets out to describe.

Adrian Boult is represented in the LP lists with the only two other versions available of *The Planets*, one of which was recently released in a brilliant sounding recording on Westminster (*WEST-WL-5235). Boult has a crisp style which etches the music sharply. Sargent and his forces paint their pictures with lines not quite as sharply defined, and London's reproduction is at a somewhat lower level than Westminster's, and with a rather darker quality. While Sargent's effort is good, we believe most folks will prefer the Boult recording. S.

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 1 ("A Sea Symphony"). Isobel Baillie (soprano), John Cameron (baritone), London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Three sides, and **Vaughan Williams: Music from "The Wasps."** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-972/3) \$11.90.

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 4 in F minor. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-974) \$5.95.

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 5 in D. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-975) \$5.95.

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 6 in E minor. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-976) \$5.95.

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 7 ("Sinfonia Antartica"). London Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, with Margaret Ritchie (soprano) and superscriptions spoken by Sir John Gielgud. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-977) \$5.95.

This completes the "regular" issue of the Vaughan Williams Symphonies, announced in a Limited Edition in TNR August 1954. A few copies of the Limited Edition are still available at some dealers at \$55, so if you are interested in the Limited Edition you should contact your dealer without delay.

When the above works (together with the previously issued *Second* and *Third*) appeared in a Limited Edition, the prevailing opinion was that here was one of the great phonographic achievements because it not only presented the great performances of a conductor but also that it offered the first recordings of some outstanding music, including the very first recording ever of the *Symphony No. 1*. We are fortunate that London has released this limited edition in its regular series, for those who want certain works may now have them at the regular single disc price. Those who would like to sample some of this music

but are not familiar with Vaughan Williams may well stick to the "fifth" tradition. If you like the fifth symphonies of Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Dvorák, the *Fifth* of Vaughan Williams will probably appeal most to you. Its general outlook is calm, serene and peaceful; it seems to be a rather personal expression of the composer. Should you find this music too lacking in fire and motion, you will find the *Fourth* a violent and angular work which, in retrospect, seems to be a logical product of the years around 1935, with the clashing dissonances depicting the social upheaval of that era. The composer's most popular symphony on these shores is his *Sixth*, a strikingly original work of four movements played without break, and with an epilogue of unusual loftiness and beauty.

All the other symphonies have names rather than numbers: *London* (No. 2), *Pastoral* (No. 3), and the first and seventh as listed above. The long *Sea Symphony* will appear to most persons as more of a cantata than a symphony, though its form puts it in the class of a symphony (but, between us, it is more of a cantata than a symphony, regardless of form). Set to texts from Walt Whitman, the orchestral writing has good sea motion and feeling. The solo work is nobly sung by the veteran Isobel Baillie, whose effortless work and pure tone are always a joy, and by John Cameron. The choir, soloists and orchestra present a problem of balance in recording which London has handled very well.

The *Sinfonia Antartica*, the master's latest symphony, was first performed in January 1953 and had its origin in an earlier work, the music for the film *Scott of the Antarctic*, released in 1949. The composer felt this music to be something deeper than incidental music tied by the short time-lengths of the episodes of a moving picture. This is program music, and each movement is preceded by a superscription spoken by Sir John Gielgud. It is a powerful work, and very typically Vaughan Williams.

Sir Adrian Boult was the logical and ideal choice for a conductor to interpret the Vaughan Williams symphonies, for he has long been associated with the composer's works. With the composer sitting in on all recording sessions, this can be classed as nothing but definitive; but beyond that it is also music which is played with style, precision, and wonderful over-all effect, as well as with devotion and knowledge. The whole set is admirable in every way, including reproduction of the best London has ever done. S.

La Fiesta Mexicana. Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble conducted by Frederick Fennell. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40011) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *La Fiesta Mexicana* ("A Mexican Folk-Song Symphony") (Reed); *Canzona* (Mennin); *Psalm* (Persichetti); *A Solemn Music* (Thomson); *Chorale and Alleluia* (Hanson).

La Fiesta Mexicana, which takes up side one of this disc, affords the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble a chance to show off its virtuosity and Mercury its ability to catch every nuance of sound; otherwise

we can see no particular need for its issuance here. The four items on the reverse are of varying interest from pretty good (Psalm) to noisy (Canzona). If hi-fi can't sell the disc, the music certainly won't; but the sound is truly great, we must say.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50034) \$5.95.

Berlioz: Harold in Italy, Op. 16. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Hermann Scherchen, with Frederick Riddle (viola). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5288) \$5.95.

Bernard Shaw, probably one of the most astute music critics that ever lived, once wrote, "Call no conductor sensitive in the highest degree to musical impressions until you have heard him in Berlioz and Mozart." Bearing this dictum in mind, one can now call Antal Dorati "sensitive in the highest degree," for his earlier recording of Mozart's *Symphony No. 40, G Minor* was an outstanding performance (the performance insofar as the writer is concerned), and now Mercury issues a brilliant recorded performance of Berlioz's magnificent *Symphonie Fantastique*.

Space will not permit any detailed discussion of its many merits, but Dorati's brilliant conception of the work (comparable only to Charles Münch's) is a revelation. He tightens up the score without hurrying it, maintains a high degree of excitement (the coda of the first movement is a striking example of his exceptional insight) and gets a response from his orchestra that must be heard to be believed.

Mercury's engineers have come up with sound that is nothing short of superb. The writer played the disc right after listening to the new Westminster Laboratory Series record and it did not suffer in the least by comparison. Irving Kolodin has written intelligent, informative and sympathetic notes—a model of their kind. Antal Dorati and Mercury have put all Berlioz lovers in their debt by producing this inspired record.

On a slightly lower artistic level, but only by comparison with the foregoing, is Dr. Hermann Scherchen's and Frederick Riddle's performance of the wonderful *Harold in Italy*. Here, too, competition is much keener because of the existence of a superlative Beecham-Primrose recording on Columbia (TNR Sept. '52).

If one may be permitted to be a little trite, it may be observed that Dr. Scherchen is a curious combination of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and, fortunately, it is Dr. Jekyll who is in command here most of the way. Mr. Hyde rears his head once in a while, and then the tempi are speeded up and the sound becomes a little frantic and noisy; but, on the whole, it is a fine performance, superlatively recorded. Neither Dr. Scherchen nor Mr. Riddle is quite in a class with Sir Thomas Beecham and William Primrose (but then, who is?) so, if you want a really brilliant recording here it is; if it is the music rather than hi-fi sound, the Columbia set is it. Better still, get both!

The only really sour note, insofar as the Westminster set is concerned, is Olin Downes' jacket notes. Mr. Downes is a notorious Berlioz belittler and uses this occasion to air, if not his dislike, certainly his resentment towards a composer whose music refuses to fall into any specific category. W.

A Berlioz Program. Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3054) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *The Trojans at Carthage*—Trojan March; *Minuet of the Will o' the Wisps*; *The Damnation of Faust*—Dance of the Sylphs, Rakoczy March; *Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9*; *Benvenuto Cellini*—Overture; *Romeo and Juliet*—Roméo seul, Tristesse, Concert et bal, Grande fête chez Capulet.

Massenet: Scènes Pittoresques (Orchestral Suite No. 4). One side, and **Massenet: Scènes Alsaciennes** (Orchestral Suite No. 7). Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3053) \$5.95.

Never has the star of Hector Berlioz shone more brilliantly on the musical firmament than this year, the 150th anniversary of the composer's birth. If your collection does not embrace any of his works, here is a nice introduction containing music easy to enjoy, well played by Herr van Otterloo and the Lamoureux Orchestra.

About the turn of the century, an admirer of Massenet said: "Massenet is the bard of sensuous music; his music is essentially evocative of beauty. By its charming and, so to speak, aphrodisiac qualities, it awakens desire and idealizes situations. . . ." The two orchestral suites (of seven) here performed seem to justify these comments; and, as the coupling is most apt, we can only say that M. Fournet does them justice, so that if you think this sort of music would appeal to you, the disc is well worth investigation.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture Fantasia).

One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Ouverture Solennelle "1812," Op. 49.** And **Tchaikovsky: Marche Slav, Op. 31.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5282) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: La Grande Paque Russe Overture, Op. 36. One-half side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphony No. 2, Op. 9 ("Antar").** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5280) \$5.95.

Herr Scherchen seems right at home in these pot-boilers by Tchaikovsky, and conducts the London Symphony with obvious relish and enthusiasm. Westminster's shimmering reproduction adds to the effect.

Scherchen offers the same coupling of *Antar* and the *Russian Easter Overture* as does Paray (*ME-MG-50028, TNR Sept. '54) and gives the Frenchman stiff competition for honors on these works. Reproduction is about equal, and there is little to choose between them; we have Paray, and we'll keep him; but if we had neither, we'd toss a coin. . . .

Dvorák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35085TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35085) \$5.95.

We need another *New World* like we need poison ivy; but you can be sure that any really fine version will be warmly welcomed whether it is the fifth or the fifteenth (which this one is). And one could hardly listen to more than a few moments of this recording to realize that this is indeed an unusually good performance. Alceo Galliera breaks no new ground anywhere in the score; his conception is a common one, concerned with the score and the traditional way of doing it. Yet there is a freshness and a vibrancy manifest everywhere, and we found ourselves quite under the spell of a work which we care for deeply. Not only is Galliera's contribution good, but the Philharmonia Orchestra plays with precision, polish, and fine tone, and Angel has supplied reproduction of a depth and richness that makes this soothing to the ears. There is nice presence and perspective to this recording.

In the May 1954 issue we reviewed the Toscanini recording, and gave a brief resumé of all good recordings of the *New World*. Those who figured in the discussion and made the best-played list included Ormandy, Kubelik, Stokowski, Szell, and Toscanini; and especially Horenstein (*VX-PL-7590), whose performance we have admired in these columns. Horenstein's reading is the most dramatic of them all but is not too overdone or mannered; it is one which most folks would enjoy immensely. Something nice can be said about all seven of the versions mentioned in this review, for the *New World Symphony* has been treated to more good recordings than any other major symphonic work on LP. The present edition, by Galliera, is one of the best all around versions, and it is a pleasure to recommend it. S.

Copland: Appalachian Spring. And **Copland: Fanfare for the Common Man.** One side, and **Copland: Billy the Kid** (Ballet Suite). And **Copland: El Salon Mexico.** National Symphony Orchestra of Washington (D. C.) conducted by Howard Mitchell. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5286) \$5.95.

What with three of Aaron Copland's most popular ballets on this disc, we can see no reason why it would not be an excellent seller; Mr. Mitchell and the National Orchestra see to it that the works are performed with taste and excitement.

An interesting tidbit is the *Fanfare for the Common Man*, one of ten short pieces commissioned by Eugene Goossens in 1942-3 while he was conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony, to pay tribute to those whose heroism marked the years of war. It is scored for 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, and tuba, with percussion giving antiphonal effects. The work seems out of place on this disc, but we enjoyed it, nevertheless, and found it rather stirring; it takes only 2 minutes, 50 seconds, so if you don't care for it, you aren't paying very much for it.

Antheil: Capital of the World. One side, and **Banfield: The Combat.** Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8278) \$5.95.

Antheil's *Capital of the World* was first presented by Ballet Theatre on the television production "Omnibus," on December 6, 1953. Three weeks later, the first stage presentation took place in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. Those who saw this TV show will recall the impact it made, the effect of which was due in no small measure to the fine orchestral score. Derived from Ernest Hemingway's story of the same name, the ballet version has made a few changes, but kept the essential feeling and colorful description of the Spanish feeling for bullfighting. The story concerns the young Spanish boy, Paco, full of dreams of bullfighting fame. He goes to Madrid from a poor village in Estramadura to become a bullfighter. Madrid, the center of great bullfighting activity, is, to the boy, the "capital of the world." After much disillusionment, Paco meets a tragic death. A unique feature of this recording—a feature conceived by the composer as an integral part of the music—is the actual sound of Spanish dancing created by Roy Fitzell, principal male dancer in Ballet Theatre's premiere performances. The young portrayal of Paco performs the traditional—and excitingly audible—flamenco, zapateado, palmas, pitos, etc.

A deeply tragic love story, *The Combat* is a brilliant ballet adaptation of "Jerusalem Delivered," an epic poem about the Crusades and the best-known work of Tasso, Italian Renaissance poet. The entire action of this one-act ballet occurs on a battlefield, a wasteland strewn with rocks. Raffaello de Banfield is a composer unknown to us. His musical score for the ballet is a product of skill and musical knowledge, but by itself it did not appeal to us very much. It is prevailingly noisy for no apparent reason, and sounds rather contrived most of the time. It is no match for the valid musical score George Antheil penned, as is apparent by playing one after the other.

The Ballet Theatre Orchestra plays these scores with a remarkable polish, a product of the expert conducting of Joseph Levine. It would be hard to imagine any of our major symphony orchestras giving a better account of these scores, which is the highest praise we can bestow. Reproduction is magnificent. S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120. One side, and **Liszt: Les Préludes** (Symphonic Poem No. 3). Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50036) \$5.95.

Ravel: La Valse. And **Fauré: Pavane, Op. 50.** One side, and **Franck: Psyché** (Symphonic Poem). Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50029) \$5.95.

There are no record releases which this reviewer anticipates more eagerly than the Paul Paray recordings on Mercury, being an open admirer of Paray's art and Mercury's recording technique. The present

group holds nothing but pleasure and admiration from this quarter, and we would unhesitatingly recommend each individual title listed above as the best available LP recording, not only at the present time, but without doubt for a long time to come. There have been several Schumann *Fourths* lately; all are good readings, but none is nearly as wonderful as Paray's. He lends tremendous strength to the score, makes it intensely interesting and exciting, and secures superb playing from the Detroit Orchestra. He has an exceptionally firm grip through most of the score, but he does not squeeze the life out of it, he does not drive it too hard, and he does put the breath of life in every bar. Paray is very fond of this work and programs it continually; it is quite understandable why after hearing him do it. Mercury has succeeded in reproducing this performance with a richness and also with a clarity that are not bettered anywhere today.

Paray's reading of Liszt's *Les Préludes* is the first really great one since the advent of LP, its only match being the historic Mengelberg performance which Paray exceeds on the point of dignity, for he does not let his hair down quite as much as Mengelberg. Nevertheless, Paray takes this faded old war horse and makes great music out of it; those of us who still enjoy the work can take great pleasure in this reading. Paray manages to give the score a dignity often lacking in performances of it, and he still displays it as a thrilling tour de force. It is a remarkable job indeed.

Of living conductors, Paul Paray is acknowledged as one of the prime interpreters of French music, and he spans three generations with the three French pieces offered on the Franck-Fauré-Ravel disc listed above. The lightness of the *Pavane* and the deftly woven strands of the sweet *Psyché* score are a sharp contrast to the virtuoso measures of *La Valse*. There are several other fine readings of *La Valse*, but none exceeds Paray's in clarity, particularly in the closing passages. We can find nothing but the highest praise for these discs, both for Paray's work and for Mercury's reproduction.

S.

Delius: Appalachia. One and one-half sides, and **Delius: Koanga**—Closing Scene. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4915) \$5.95.

Music of Delius. Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8182) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring; Summer Night on the River; Hassan—Serenade and Intermezzo; Caprice and Elegy; Irmelin—Prelude.*

Ever since the dawn of LP this reviewer has been patiently awaiting an LP of the *Appalachia*. The old 78 set by Beecham has long been a favorite, and the idea of hearing this music in connected fashion is now a reality, with the old master again conducting it. The score bears the subtitle "Variations on an old slave song for full orchestra with final chorus" and the

prefatory note by the composer: "Appalachia is the old Indian name for Northern America. . . ." While this work is a theme and variations type, the effect is continuous rather than episodic, for Delius does not follow classic models in devising his variations. The theme is a lovely, haunting, songful one upon which Delius has woven the most beautiful variations, all threaded with the exquisite and subtly changing harmonies which are unique with him. This is one of the most refreshing scores we have ever heard, and we could wish for nothing more than that it would realize a great popularity. Anyone who enjoys the average run of romantic classical music will find this a wonderful listening experience.

Needless to say, Sir Thomas Beecham directs a performance of surpassing beauty and eloquence, one which would be impossible to better; for he, of all conductors, is the champion of the music of Delius and has a remarkable affinity for projecting it perfectly. Sir Thomas is unquestionably the most versatile conductor ever to appear before the public—he can give a good performance of more different schools of music than any man who ever held a baton—the music of the early masters such as Haydn and Mozart, the Italian operatic school, the French composers, even Wagner and Tchaikovsky, and English music has no better interpreter. When he gets into a prime specialty such as Delius, the effect is incomparable. This LP is a rare masterpiece among definitive performances. The closing scene of *Koanga* is a choice filler for the second side and is performed superbly. Reproduction throughout is splendid.

Although issued some time ago, we missed listing the Capital disc of shorter Delius works. As far as we can determine, this is the only Delius LP of orchestral music recorded by an all American outfit, and it is a notably fine job all the way around, with reproduction of richness and clarity projecting the finished orchestral playing and sympathetic conducting.

S.

Arriaga: Sinfonia a Gran Orquesta in Re. One and one-half sides, and **Arriaga: Los Esclavos Felices**—Overture. Orquesta Nacional de Madrid conducted by Jesús Arámbari. And **Arriaga: Agar** (cantata). Maria Repollés (soprano) with Orquesta Nacional de Madrid conducted by Jesús Arámbari. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9756) \$5.85.

It is when such a disc as this is issued that record critics really have some value, for it is a record which might easily be overlooked by many persons who, if they but listened to it, would be very much interested. It is one thing to be enraptured and to recommend a new Beethoven symphony; but Beethoven is well enough known that most persons who might be interested will seek out the disc for themselves and thus learn whether or not they like it. We will begin this critique by confessing that Arriaga was only a name to us; we knew nothing about him.

Juan Crisostomo Jacobo Antonio Arriaga y Balzola (1806-1825) was born in Bilbao, was a musical genius

as a child (he wrote a Spanish opera without having learned even the elements of harmony) and was sent, in 1821, to the Conservatoire at Paris to study violin. On his premature death he left three string quartets, an overture, a symphony, a cantata and several other unpublished works. Two of the quartets are available on LP discs (*CH-CHS-1068, TNR Feb. '51).

The symphony, on the present disc, is wonderful. We'll wager your friends will think it is one of Mozart's. It is in four movements: Adagio, Andante, Minuetto (Allegro) and Allegro con moto. It moves right along, sustaining interest—an astounding work for a boy not yet twenty! We are fortunate indeed that a sudden renewed interest has developed in Arriaga's works in his native Spain and that his manuscripts have been collected and given to the Arriaga Museum by his great-grand nephew.

The overture to Arriaga's one opera, *Los Esclavos Felices*, is a lovely little work; we simply wouldn't believe it was written by a child of thirteen (!). Maria Ripollés, one of Spain's outstanding sopranos, renders Agar, a cantata dealing with the biblical theme of Hagar and Ismael; the performance is eminently satisfactory.

It is our belief that a lot of persons will find a wealth of musical enjoyment in this disc; it is the "sleeper" of the month, and has our fondest blessing.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4888) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphony No. 2, Op. 9 ("Antar"). One and one-half sides, and **Glazounov: Stenka Razin, Op. 13** (Symphonic Poem). L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1060) \$5.95.

There are many who felt that of all the *Scheherazade* LP's, Ormandy and the Philadelphians (*C-ML-4089) was probably the most sumptuous, but that the reproduction, excellent as it was, had been surpassed by most of the newer recordings. Well, all of that has been rectified, for Columbia has re-recorded this work with the ultimate in hi-fi reproduction. Those of us who feel that an instrument with the tone of the Philadelphia Orchestra adds much to the performance of such romantic fare as *Scheherazade* need not suffer inadequate reproduction. This disc can hold its own with any other LP of the work, and most folks will join us in declaring it the most gorgeous recording of them all. Columbia also supplies the nicest package, a folder-type of cover with copious pictures and notes. Those who wish to compare versions will find there are at least five other good performances and recordings conducted by André, Ansermet, Dobrowen, Dorati, and Stokowski.

Rimsky's *Antar* Symphony has had several recent recordings including a notably good one by Paul Paray (*ME-MG-50028), coupled with the popular Russian *Easter Overture*. Ansermet's current disc puts the first three movements of *Antar* on one side, with the fourth movement and the Glazounov on the other

side. While Ansermet observes every repeat and directs a performance of remarkable clarity and detail, it must be admitted that Paray makes the work more interesting. The reproduction of both versions is superb, London's a bit darker, Mercury's bold and brilliant.

Glazounov's tone poem, *Stenka Razin*, is getting on LP for the first time; it has been many years since it was recorded—way back in the old "78" days. This music is built around the story of a ruthless Cossack marauder-pirate of the seventeenth century. The well known Volga boat-song is the backbone of the work, and those who like this melody will doubly enjoy this symphonic poem. Ansermet gives the work a reading of uncommon refinement, the best it has ever enjoyed.

S.

José Greco Ballet. José Greco Ballet Company with the Orquesta Zarzuela de Madrid conducted by Roger Machado. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9757) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *El Baile de Luis Alonso* (Giménez); *Mosaico Sevillano* (Torróba); *Danza del Contrabandista* (Sandoval); *Madrid, 1890* (Chueca); *Leyenda de la Petenera* (Machado); *Viva Castilla* (arr. Machado); *Bincon Flamenco* (trad.); *Córdoba* (Albéniz); *En el Cortijo* (Bretón).

Danzas Flamencas. José Greco Ballet Company. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9758) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Cante Jondo*; *Zambra Gitana*; *Fandango*; *Soleares*; *Tientos*; *Tientos por Sambrá*; *Seguiriya*; *La Cana*; *Alegrías*; *Sevillanas*; *Peteneras*; *Bulerías*.

Ole! Ole! Orquesta Zarzuela de Madrid conducted by Frederico Moreno Torróba. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9736) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *El Tambor de Granaderos—Prelude* (Chapi); *Serenata Espanola* (Malats); *Mosaico Sevillano* (Torróba); *Danzas Asturianas* (Torróba); *La Giralda* (Juarranz); *La Mazurca de las Sombrillas* (Torróba); *La Habañera del Soldadito* (Torróba); *Tirana* (from "Barberillo de Lavapiés") (Barbieri); *Los Vareadores* (Torróba); *Alegria de la Huerta* (Chueca); *La Revoltosa—Prelude* (Chapi); *El Niño de Jerez* (Zabala).

Fiesta in Madrid. Orquesta Zarzuela de Madrid conducted by Frederico Moreno Torróba. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9735) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Jardines de Granada* (Torróba); *Boda de Luis Alonso* (Giménez); *Escena y Danza Charra* (Gombau); *Agua, Azucarillos y Aguardiente* (Chueca); *Danza del Destino* (Gombau); *El Gato Montes* (Penella); *Monte Carmelo—Habañera* (Torróba); *Zapateado* (Bretón); *Leyenda del Beso* (Vert); *Antequera* (Torróba); *El Baile de Luis Alonso* (Giménez); *Vito* (Lope).

The gay, exciting music of Spain apparently has a great attraction for many Americans, judging from the great number of such records which have been issued. Four Decca entries into the field crossed our desk this month, and we list them above. It may seem funny to some persons that Decca features the world-

famous José Greco Ballet Company on a record; the stamping of their feet sound, on a record, just like the stamping of anybody else's.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1) \$5.95.

Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* is considered by most of us to be a rugged, elemental, earthy sort of music whose pagan theme is expressed in music of bold and jagged outlines. The reading which depicts this feeling the best is the most successful; and of all the LP's of the work, none has succeeded better than the Dorati-Minneapolis disc (*ME-MG-50030), and the reproduction accorded this reading still stands as a landmark in the art of reproducing tympani. By comparison, the present reading (and reproduction) by Markevitch is too refined. He has rounded off the jagged edges and taken away much of the impact of the score. This is especially noticeable on the second side where the famous tympani passages are timid and practically missing in some instances. Dorati lays on this section with a firm hand, bearing down on these sections which are hair-raising in their elemental force, giving the effect literally of "beating the skins"—for the tympani are symbolic of the early music forms of drum-beating. Those who really want to hear this work played with profile will recognize the exceptional merit of the Dorati reading. Steinberg has directed a performance of good dimensions, as have also Ansermet and Monteux.

On the credit side of the ledger, we must state that the Philharmonia Orchestra plays with precision and finish, as they always do, and have been well reproduced within what sounds like a limited range. The reproduction is just not the kind which *Sacre* deserves—possibly this very same performance would make an entirely different impression if reproduced in the same manner as RCA Victor's recent issue of *Ein Heldenleben* by the Chicago Orchestra. This is a deluxe edition, box-type container, a fine print suitable for framing and a big leaflet of notes and photographs.

S.

Gershwin—arr. Bennett: *Porgy and Bess*—A Symphonic Picture. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Pique Dame, Op. 68** (Orchestral Synthesis). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4904) \$5.95.

Mood for Love. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4917) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *I'm in the Mood for Love; The Sweet Surrender Waltz; April in Paris; I Cover the Waterfront; You Go to My Head; While We're Young; Alone Together; What a Difference a Day Makes.*

Kostelanetz is one of the greatest living musical salesmen, having sold *Carmen*, *Bohème*, and *Traviata* to the masses. If he can sell *Pique Dame*, however, he will have done something that the opera could not

do for itself. His performances of both it and *Porgy and Bess* are well up to the standard he has set for himself.

The second disc above represents another specialty of "Kosty": mood music. Seems as though the poor taste of the comic book publishers is spreading to the record jacket designers; but the music is very fine. So just close your eyes as you ask for this one.

CONCERTO



Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47. Ginette Neveu (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. One and one-half sides, and **Suk: (4) Pieces, Op. 47.** Ginette Neveu (violin) accompanied by Jean Neveu (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35129TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35129) \$5.95.

Chausson: Poème, Op. 25. Ginette Neveu (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. One side, and **Debussy: Sonata No. 3.** And **Ravel: Tzigane.** Ginette Neveu (violin) and Jean Neveu (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35128TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35128) \$5.95.

Ginette Neveu was en route to New York for her third American tour, with Jean, her pianist brother, when the plane on which they were flying from France crashed into a fog-shrouded mountain-side over the Azores. Sister and brother were killed (October 28, 1949); surviving, undestroyed, was Ginette's other inseparable travelling companion, her Stradivarius violin. These two albums are issued by Angel, dedicated to the memory of the young and greatly gifted French Violinist, twenty-eight at the time of her death, and acknowledged to be a violinist of the first rank. She had received extraordinary praise from the American critics on previous concert tours, and this reviewer recalls a most memorable performance by this fine artist, a performance far beyond what was expected by all those who attended the concert.

While these recordings, obviously, were made a few years ago, the sound is remarkably good, for both violin and orchestra (and piano). The reading of the Chausson *Poème* is particularly beautiful, and we doubt that any other recording is any lovelier, or done with more genuine poetry. The Sibelius *Concerto*, a difficult work to project effectively, has been recorded by several top ranking fiddlers, and one or two "experts" on its interpretation. But none address the work with a greater beauty of tone and lyric feeling than this young lady of such unusual talent and musicianship. Her playing is always communicative, and mindful of musical beauty, as well as being technically accurate. Her insight as an interpreter of French music is demonstrated amply on the Chausson, Debussy, Ravel disc; the Sibelius and Suk disc show the versatility of this artist. We would recommend both of these discs highly to those interested in the violin, as well as to those who wish recordings by this particular artist in their library.

S.

Bartók: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-3) \$5.95.

When Menuhin and Furtwängler get together the result is usually a performance of great breadth and intensity. The Bartók is no exception, for they have succeeded in achieving a level of inspiration and searching insight that brands this work as nothing short of masterly. Menuhin has a burning devotion for the music, and he plays it with all the eloquence at his command, which is considerable indeed. Furtwängler is an old hand at eloquence too, and between these two artists, who work so well together, this recording is a highly convincing account of the score. We would not hesitate to claim it the best of the three available LP versions; it is the best reproduction also.

Bartók's stature as a composer, destined to rank with the greatest through the ages, continues to rise with the impressive list of his recordings and with the duplications of the more popular works of his output. Finished in 1938 and first performed in this country in 1943, the *Violin Concerto* is cast in the classical three-movement pattern. The first is a richly woven sonata-type affair—the opening theme being lyric and of a pronouncedly Magyar character. The second movement is in theme and variation form, beginning as an introspective reverie, then passing through six variations. The movement ends, in a rather ethereal vein, rather abruptly, and the finale, a rondo, opens with a rugged theme derived from the first movement. The spirit of the finale as a whole is riotous and fantastic, abounding in stinging, pungent dissonance and arresting rhythmic figuration. We would imagine the work is a "bruiser" to play and requires a virtuoso of the first rank to handle what sounds to us like mighty difficult violin writing. Menuhin sails through the work with apparent ease and obvious delight.

This concerto is certainly one of the great ones written for the violin, and it is given full justice in this wholly admirable recording. The packaging is elaborate, with a box-type container, a Van Gogh print suitable for framing and plenty of written material.

S.

Bartók: Concerto No. 2. One side, and **Bartók: Concerto No. 3.** Edith Farnadi (piano) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5249) \$5.95.

The present disc brings the total to five of recordings of the Bartók *Third Concerto*, which would seem to signify the growing popularity of Bartók as an accepted master. We recently reviewed the *Third* as played by Pennario and by Katchen, discs released the same month, and stated a preference for Pennario with Golschmann conducting (*CLP-8253)—both versions were coupled with the Prokofiev *Third Concerto*. There is also an authoritative version by Sandor and Ormandy, who gave the work its premiere in 1946.

We are mighty glad that several versions of the *Third* are available for it makes the job of evaluating the present disc much easier. After playing through the *Third* we were left with the impression that this music is about as dry and uninteresting as anything we ever heard; and yet we recall being most enthusiastic about the music when reviewing the Pennario and Katchen discs. So we played the Pennario disc again—and then compared it with the Farnadi performance. What a difference! This music is certainly not in the least dry or uninteresting. Nothing of the sort. It is a matter of who is performing. Farnadi walks through the score, with a slow, serene manner that robs the music of its vitality; and Scherchen's accompaniment adds nothing to this pale picture. Pennario and Golschmann give the music a sparkling performance that breathes vitality into the work. If you really want to hear this music we could hardly recommend the Farnadi performance. Much the same could be said of the *Second Concerto*. Capitol has supplied reproduction with more appeal than Westminster. For those who wish the Bartók *Second Concerto* we would suggest the Földes and Bigot set on Vox (*VX-PL-6620 or 8220).

S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 26 in D, K. 537** ("Coronation"). Robert Casadesu (piano) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4901) \$5.95.

There are already satisfactory versions of these two popular Mozart concertos available, but none with front-rank American artists with high fidelity reproduction. Casadesu turns in fine performances, so if you have neither of these beautiful works in your library, here is a suitable coupling sure to please.

CHORAL



Berlioz. Te Deum. (Sung in Latin). Alexander Young (tenor) with the London Philharmonic Choir, the Dulwich College Boys Choir and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, with Dennis Vaughan (organ). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4897) \$5.95.

Off and on during the past twenty years the writer has often been annoyed at the condescension and widespread ignorance, even among trained musicians, concerning Hector Berlioz. Even as recently as several weeks ago, a very well-known editor and writer was so ill-advised as to refer to Berlioz as "a blundering dullard"—presumably the musical world would be incomplete without such critics. One was tempted to hope that the numerous really good performances and recordings of Berlioz' major works issued in the past year or two would go a long way towards correcting this sort of bias. Evidently the late Cecil Gray was eminently correct, however, when he wrote, concerning Berlioz and his music: "Either you receive at once, from the very first work of his you hear, a thrill akin to an electric shock, or else you are completely insulated and rendered forever immune by a pachy-

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ◊ indicates 45 rpm.

dermatous rubber hide of indifference or distaste."

Now that the above is out of the writer's system one can perhaps, consider with reasonable dispassion the great *Te Deum*, recorded here for the first time in phonographic history. And what a performance it is! Sir Thomas Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the chorus and soloist Alexander Young give an inspired and loving reading of the score that is as persuasive as it is beautiful.

It is difficult to know just where to begin to write of the work's glories. To those who know their Berlioz it is redundant to speak of his unique melody, his always appropriate and inspired orchestration and his almost unparalleled ability to match music and words. All these characteristics are very much in evidence. One outstanding feature of the *Te Deum* is the very original use of the organ. Here the instrument is used not to reinforce the orchestra, as is usually the case with other composers, but is used antiphonally and dramatically. A passing note: the organ is in tune with the orchestra, an unusual circumstance, even on records.

It is a real pleasure to be able to report that the recording is excellent in every way. The sound is good, although the task of the recording engineers must have been a difficult one. No data as to the numerical size of the orchestra and chorus is given, but the effects are reasonably massive. There are fine notes by Charles Barr and the Latin-English text is supplied. This is surely one of the great recordings of this year and will be considered, in years to come, a phonographic landmark.

W.

Weber: Cantata "Kampf und Sieg," Op. 44 ("Battle and Victory"). Lisbeth Schmidt-Glänzel (soprano), Eva Fleischer (contralto), Dr. Gert Lutze (tenor), Hand Krämer (baritone), Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Herbert Kegel. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7126) \$5.95.

For a person, such as the writer, who admires a great deal of Weber, this disc comes as something of a shock. That the composer of *Der Freischütz*, *Oberon* and the piano concerti could have written such bombast as this cantata is a depressing realization; to record it seems almost unfair, sort of like unearthing a skeleton in the family closet or, to mix the metaphor, airing some dirty linen.

Kampf und Sieg was written by the twenty-nine year old Weber to celebrate Wellington's victory at Waterloo. Its first performance was in Prague on 15 December 1815 and it received "a rapturous reception." As performed here the text has been "internationalized;" that is most of the outright nationalistic (i.e. German-Prussian) sentiment has been expunged as has the musical quote of *God Save the King!*

The performers are mediocre, baritone Kramer possessing an unenviable wobble while tenor Lutze bleats. The distaff side fares a little better but they, too, are undistinguished. The chorus is also ordinary as is everything about the disc, including the recorded sound.

W.

Handel: The Messiah. (Sung in English). Elsie Morrison (soprano), Marjorie Thomas (contralto), Richard Lewis (tenor), Norman Walker (bass), Huddersfield Choral Society and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35124/6TP) \$14.85. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3510C) \$17.85.

This is Sir Malcolm Sargent's second recording of Handel's *Messiah* and differs very little from his previous one. The soloists here are not quite as good, the chorus is as large and the orchestration used is Sargent's own. In a somewhat extensive apologia as to how *The Messiah* should be performed, Sir Malcolm makes out a good case for using a large chorus and extra orchestration. He points out, with ample reason, that nearly everything is left to the conductor, for Handel did not supply any information as to its performance. Now, if one had never heard the performance under Dr. Scherchen as recorded by Westminster (TNR Apr. '54) one would be more willing to agree; but, unfortunately, this recording does nothing but demonstrate one man's ideas in performing this great oratorio which, insofar as this reviewer was concerned, made dull listening indeed.

As a case in point, listen to the wonderful chorus *For unto Us a Child Is Born*. The results achieved by the present group can best be described by a quote from Bernard Shaw, who wrote concerning a performance in the late Eighties "The choruses . . . (are) sung in the old prosaic jog-trot. *Unto Us a Child Is Born* is sung correctly and with admirable purity of tone; but in spirit and feeling it might have been the congratulations offered to a respectable suburban family on the latest addition to the family nursery: one whose name could not by any stretch of the imagination be called Wonderful! Counsellor! The Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And so on; in the most famous of choruses there is not one really rapturous Hallelujah. Norman Walker is not able to make much of the magnificent *Why do the Nations*. Miss Morrison sings well in her main aria, *I Know that My Redeemer Liveth* but she, like everyone else suffers from a lack of imagination.

It is entirely possible that this performance will fine favor in many quarters, but for those who appreciate or demand style and spirit in their performances, this one had best be avoided.

The notes, pictures and texts are handsomely printed, making a very beautiful package. One has heard better recorded sound.

W.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). One side, and **Mozart: Ein musikalischer Spass, K. 522** ("A Musical Joke"). Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet with Josef Herrmann (double bass). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5315) \$5.95.

In our May 1950 issue we reviewed a Vox recording of *Ein musikalischer Spass*, now deleted, and in

April 1954 we mentioned that another was available, but it didn't impress us enough to comment on it. However, here is a very fine recording of this musical joke, and it is good to welcome this bit of Mozart tongue-in-cheek back to the catalogs. Irving Kolodin's program notes on the jacket are a pre-requisite for the uninitiated—you must understand this work to appreciate the dullness of it.

The recording of *Eine kleine* is satisfactory; but this disc's *raison d'être* is *Ein musicalischer Spass*.

Shostakovich: Quartet No. 1, Op. 49. One side, and **Prokofiev: Quartet No. 1, Op. 50.** Guilet Quartet. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3113) \$4.85.

Kabalevsky: Quartet No. 2 in G minor, Op. 44. Naumann Quartet. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7083) \$5.95.

d'Indy: Suite in Olden Style for Trumpet, Two Flutes and Strings, Op. 24. Guilet Quartet with Harry Glantz (trumpet), Julius Baker and Claude Montaux (flutes) and Philip Sklar (bass). One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Septet for Piano, Strings and Trumpet, Op. 65.** Guilet Quartet with Menahem Pressler (piano), Harry Glantz (trumpet) and Philip Sklar (bass). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3096) \$4.85.

Schmidt: Quintet in G for Piano and Strings. Barylli Quartet with Joerg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5158) \$5.95.

Porter: Quartet No. 6. Quatuor Pascal de la Radiodiffusion française. One side, and **Caturla: Cuban Suite No. 1 for Eight Wind Instruments and Piano.** And **Roldan: Ritmica No. 1 for Wind Quintet and Piano.** Ensemble de Soloistes de l'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by Georges Tzipine. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35105TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35105) \$5.95.

Nine examples of modern chamber music this month, only one of which (the Saint-Saëns) has been previously recorded on LP.

Shostakovich's *First Quartet* is the first of five; it antedates his "smart aleck" period and his first brush with Soviet critics. It is serious, not overly dramatic, sometimes moody, sometimes joyous. . . . In 1930 Prokofiev came to America and (among other things) was commissioned by the Library of Congress to compose chamber work, which turned out to be the *Quartet No. 1, Op. 50*. In three movements (fast-fast-slow) the composer is songfully rhythmical, pulsatingly rhythmical, and sad. . . . The Kabalevsky *Op. 44* dates from 1945, is a mature quartet, one of the few chamber works to penetrate the iron curtain; we think it is supposed to be "the epic, the heroic, the monumental: these are the highest aims of the Soviet composer." . . . The d'Indy and Saint-Saëns works are somewhat unique in featuring the trumpet; Saint-Saëns generally receives credit for "discovering" the usefulness of the trumpet in chamber ensembles, and d'Indy, no doubt, patterned his work after it. Both works are refreshing changes for lovers of chamber

music whose tastes have become jaded. . . . The present *Quintet* is the only recorded work to date of Franz Schmidt (1874-1939), a native of Austria and not at all known outside of Vienna. The impulse for this piano quintet was the now famous one-armed pianist, Paul Wittgenstein, who also commissioned Ravel's well-known *Concerto for the Left Hand Alone*; however, in 1943 Friedrich Wührer expanded the arrangement to two-handed piano, and this is the version we hear. We had time for only a single hearing, but the work impressed us. . . . Quincy Porter (1897-) and Amadeo Roldan (1900-1939) are here represented for the first time on discs, and Alejandro Caturla (1906-1940) for the second. Porter, an American, writes chamber music singularly unnationalistic and, judging from this disc, singularly undistinguished. To Roldan and Caturla is owed the creation of the first Cuban symphonic works, having caught the spirit of Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Les Six. Parts of the *Cuban Suite* sound like an orchestra tuning up; by the time you hear the *Ritmica*, you have the feeling that they are at last in tune and waiting for the conductor.

The performers on each of the above discs are satisfactory; our comments on the Angel are admittedly personal, but probably the performers are playing what's written.

PIANO



Liberace Plays Chopin. Liberace (piano). 1-12" disc (*CML-4900) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Waltz in C-sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2; Nocturne in F-sharp, Op. 15, No. 2; Fantasie-Impromptu in C-sharp minor, Op. 66; Nocturne in E-flat, Op. 9, No. 2; Etude in A-flat, Op. 25, No. 1; Polonaise in A, Op. 50, No. 1; Polonaise in A-flat, Op. 53, No. 6; Etude in E, Op. 10, No. 3; Waltz in D-flat, Op. 64, No. 1 ("Minute"); Prelude in E minor, Op. 28, No. 4; Etude in F minor, Op. 10, No. 9; Prelude in A, Op. 28, No. 7; Grande Valse, Op. 42.*

If you want a good laugh, read the jacket notes to this disc. "It is especially apt that Liberace should elect to play this music, for he himself is half Polish . . . Every selection, no matter how familiar it was . . . was re-examined and endlessly rehearsed until he felt he had reached the heart of it . . ." Whether or not you will be interested in this record will depend upon whether you are interested in Chopin or Liberace.

Bach: Die Kunst der Fuge. Josef and Grete Dichler (duo-pianists). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-215) \$11.90.

Last July we reviewed a harpsichord version of this work, going to great lengths to explain that Bach wrote *Die Kunst der Fuge* "in open score, with no indication of any instrumentation. . . ." So now we have a two-piano version, using the arrangement of Bruno Seidlhofer, by the capable Dichlers.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
(.) indicates 45 rpm.

Now Bach never knew a piano as we know it today, and he surely could not have had a piano (or two pianos) in mind when he composed this monumental score; therefore it will be said, in some quarters, that the present version is incongruous. Yet we feel that it compliments Bach's greatness; the pianos do not sound out of place to us, even though we rather expected that they would. We do not mean to take any credit away from the Dichlers; they seem well aware of what they are doing, and are evidently dedicated to their task.

There are now four versions available: organ (TNR Mar. '51), orchestral (TNR Aug. '50), harpsichord (TNR July '54) and the present one for two pianos. This may not be the last word, but there is plenty of choice considering the demand for the item.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 2, No. 2. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 11 in B-flat, Op. 22.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-948) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 26 in E-flat, Op. 81a ("Les Adieux"). And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90.** And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-949) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in E-flat, Op. 7. One side and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in D, Op. 10, No. 3.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-950) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 16 in G, Op. 31, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 18 in E-flat, Op. 31, No. 3.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-951) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13 ("Pathétique"). And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in E, Op. 14, No. 1.** And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 15 in D, Op. 28.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-952) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 31 in A-flat, Op. 110. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-953) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in C, Op. 2, No. 3. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1.** Cuttner Solomon (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1821) \$5.95.

There are 189 recordings of Beethoven Piano Sonatas in the LP catalogs at the present writing, including two orchestral versions of the *Hammerklavier*. There are 16 of the *Appassionata*, 15 of the *Moonlight*, and 11 of the *Waldstein*. Surely the market cannot support this vast amount of repetition; how can it be profitable to the manufacturers? What is the record dealer going to do? How can the buyer make an intelligent decision? And the poor critic . . . it took over six hours just to play each of the above all the way through once. We can report that

Backhaus continues with (and hereby completes) his complete Beethoven cycle with his heavy, German hand which many persons admire but probably just as many consider too stodgy, preferring the lighter Gieseke or Badura-Skoda touch. Or Solomon's.

ORGAN

A Christmas Recital. Alexander Schreiner, playing the organ at the Mormon Tabernacle, Salt Lake City (Utah). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1198) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Christians, Awake!*; *Sussex Carol*; *Yeoman's Carol*; *A Rose Breaks into Bloom*; *The Holly and the Ivy*; *Joseph, Dearest Joseph Mine*; *Deck the Halls*; *In Sweet Rejoicing*; *Angels from the Realm of Glory*; *In the Town of Bethlehem*; *Good King Wenceslas*; *Oh, Little One Sweet*; *We Three Kings of Orient Are*; *The Crown of Roses*; *O Thou Joyful Day*.

Alexander Schreiner, since 1924 organist of the Mormon Tabernacle, here presents versions of some of the popular and some not so well known carols at Christmas (and one for Epiphany). A successful recital, well done.

OPERA

Vives: Doña Francisquita (complete). (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Chamber Chorus of the Orfeon Donostiarra de San Sebastian and the Grand Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ataulfo Argenta. 2-12" discs in album (*L-TW-91005/6) \$11.90.

Vives: Doña Francisquita (excerpts). (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Coro General y Orquesta Sinfonica Espanola conducted by Rafael Ferrer Fito. 1-12" disc (*SORIA 70006TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*SORIA 70006) \$5.95.

This month two recordings of the zarzuela *Doña Francisquita* appear where none were for some fifty years of phonographic history. For some reason, known only to the record companies, there seems to be a demand for Spanish music of this type, so one can sit back confidently and expect more. Not that these little operettas are bad; on the contrary, some are very delightful, all seem to be tuneful and may be considered ideal for those whose musical taste is inclined towards the lightweight. Insofar as the writer is concerned they are not sufficiently "desperate" (à la the old, old comic strip "S'Matter Pop" that featured, beside Pop and the kids, a little boy known as Desperate Ambrose).

The London recording is a very plush job so far as sound, performance and atmosphere are concerned. The singers are first rate and, being Spanish, know their way around the music, thus lending a degree of authenticity to the proceedings that is very convincing. One wishes this authenticity could be included in all

recorded performances. No particular singer can be singled out for special praise—all are excellent. Direction and orchestral playing are on an equally high level.

The Soria recording, while not identified as an abbreviated version is just that. The principal arias and ensembles seem to be included. The singers are good, but the recording is not in a class with the London discs.

For reasons of economy (one assumes) London omits a libretto; Soria furnishes one, but in Spanish only—which was certainly no help to one listener. The net result of both actions is to leave the listener who doesn't understand Spanish in the dark, a proceeding designed, no doubt, to discourage all but the most ardent.

There is admittedly, a facetious tone to this review, occasioned by the fact that, in this reviewer's opinion, neither company has played fair with its prospective customers. After all, given no information about works that are indigenous to foreign countries and for which scores and libretti are difficult of access, this reviewer was inclined, perhaps unfairly, to regard the matter as a joke, and not a very good one at that.

W.

Bellini: Norma (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Orchestra and Chorus of the Teatro alla Scala (Milan) conducted by Tullio Serafin. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35148/50TP) \$14.85. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3517C) \$17.85.

Norma.....Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Pollione.....Mario Filippeschi (t)
Adalgisa.....Ebe Stignani (ms)
Oroveso.....Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs)
Flavio.....Paolo Caroli (t)
Clotilde.....Rita Cavallari (s)

This is the first really new recording of Bellini's *Norma* since the advent of LP records. The earlier set, on Cetra, was dubbed from Parlophone 78's.

Norma had its first production on 26 December 1831 at Milan. Since that time it has been a popular favorite with both public and singers. To call the role of *Norma* is to list the great sopranos of each generation; Pasta (who created the role), Malibran, Cruvelli, Grisi, Jenny Lind, Lili Lehmann and, more recently, Rosa Ponselle and Zinka Milanov.

The present set features the greatly admired Maria Callas in the title role and the writer now begins what will, in all probability be a minority report. Miss Callas' *Norma* came to him as a distinct disappointment. The role is too taxing, her voice picks up a vibrato that is disturbing; and, though she seems to work very hard and has a few very grand moments, the ultimate impression is that she has overmatched herself. By not having Guiseppe di Stephano as Pollione, the performance loses a great deal of distinction; for his replacement, Mario Filippeschi, is a leather-lunged tenor who lacks the requisite polish and style for Bellini's smooth melodies. Ebe Stignani is a fine

Adalgisa and, although her voice shows signs of wear, she is perhaps the most satisfactory singer in the cast. Rossi-Lemeni either was not in good voice for the occasion or was out of love with the part, for his contribution is a wooly, shaky voice that seems to lack both power and expression.

Tullio Serafin conducts in a workmanlike fashion but does not seem able to infuse any degree of enthusiasm into the proceedings. Recorded sound is good and the package and notes are models of their kind.

Perhaps one has been hypercritical of the set, but Angel, in its previous operatic releases, set a very high standard, one that is not met by this new recording of *Norma*.
W.

Verdi Arias. Robert Weede (baritone) with the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Nicholas Rescigno. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8279) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Un Ballo in Maschera*—Eri tu che macchiavi; *Falstaff*—Ford's monologue; *Il Trovatore*—Il balen del suo sorriso; *Rigoletto*—Pari siamo; *Rigoletto*—Cortigiani, vil razza dannata; *Otello*—Credo; *La Traviata*—Di provenza il mar; *Don Carlo*—Death of Rodrigo.

Operatic Recital. Gino Penno (tenor) with chorus and symphony orchestra conducted by Antonio Narducci. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9117) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: *Norma*—Svanir le voci (recit.), Meco all'altar di Venere; *Simon Boccanegra*—O inferno (recit.), Sento avvampar nell'anima; *Il Trovatore*—Di quella pira.

For the surprise of the month, or for the year in fact, the writer would nominate this Capitol disc by Robert Weede. Mr. Weede has been "singing around" for the past fifteen years at least and, to the best of this column's knowledge, has never been recorded on microgroove discs before. Thus two things become apparent immediately, (1) Robert Weede has a magnificent voice and (2) the seven Verdi arias he sings have wonderful orchestral accompaniments. This record is far and away one of the finest vocal recordings to date. There is ideal balance between singer and orchestra, and every detail of the latter is captured with amazing accuracy. It is a good sized orchestra too, larger than one usually hears in the opera house.

As for the singing, it is sterling from start to finish. The opening *Eri tu* is about the best on records, as is the astonishing aria from *Falstaff*. Even this reviewer's personal *bête-noir*, *Di provenza* is sung in a way that makes it seem good music (which he is sure it isn't). The *Rigoletto* arias are superbly sung, particularly the dramatic *Cortigiani, vil razza dannata* wherein Bre'r Weede hurls his *assasini* at the courtiers in thrilling fashion. The evergreen *Il balen* and the *Credo* are sung as though for the first time, while the moving music of Rodrigo's Death from *Don Carlo* makes a fitting close to a record that contains some of the finest singing to be heard on LP.

Gino Penno's little London disc is also an excellent

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
() indicates 45 rpm.

affair, the *Norma* excerpt being especially fine. Penno has a robust tenor, a little unsuited but always musical. The *Trovatore* excerpt suffers from very poor recording at its climax; otherwise it would rank high among recorded interpretations of this magnificent aria.

W.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists and Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 4-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-22) \$23.80.

Princess von Werdenberg.....Maria Reining (s)
Baron Ochs.....Ludwig Weber (bs)
Octavian.....Sena Jurinac (ms)
von Faninal.....Alfred Poell (bt)
Sophie.....Hilde Gueden (s)
Marianne.....Judith Hellwig (s)
Valzacchi.....Peter Klein (t)
Annina.....Hilde Ross Majdan (a)

The third LP recording of Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* makes its appearance this month in a sparkling new recording by London. As might be expected, it puts its predecessors quite in the shade, technically, although the sound on the older Urania set (TNR June '51) is still not bad.

Artistically this set is a match for both the others, in most instances, and superior in others. The Marchallin, in the person of Maria Reining, is a fine characterization, a bit youthful sounding at times but always aristocratic and urbane. Sena Jurinac's Octavian is delightful—sprightly, youthful and fresh. As the starry-eyed Sophie, Hilde Gueden sounds lovely and, one suspects from her photographs, looks the same on the stage.

The male members of the cast are all equally fine. Ludwig Weber's Baron Ochs has been heard before (the Vox set, reviewed in the Jan. '53 issue) but never with such plush sound. One can only repeat what was written about that earlier performance; that Weber is never coarse, has an excellent voice and presents a musically polished Baron Ochs, yet with all this he never loses sight of the fact that the Baron is what would nowadays be called a "stinker." Alfred Poell heads the list of the lesser male characters and turns in a first-class von Faninal while Peter Klein (Valzacchi) and Anton Dermota (Italian Singer) do excellently. The others in the long cast have been well chosen and give good performances.

Erich Kleiber, an old hand with Strauss, keeps the performance moving along and almost succeeds in making many of the arid patches blossom. The orchestra, it goes without saying, plays and sounds like the great organization it is. London has supplied truly first-class sound. The only fault that can be found with the set is the miserable libretto that is supplied. It must date from the 90's—such expressions as "I suffer from the vapours this morning" and "Laughest thou at me" are ridiculous in the extreme.

W.

Arias Sung and Acted. Maria Caniglia, Licia Albanese, Zinka Milanov (sopranos); Giuseppe di Stefano, Nino Mazziotti (tenors); Armando Borgioli (baritone); Ezio Pinza (basso); Joan Fontaine, Leif Erickson, Karl Weber, Geraldine Brooks, Judith Anderson, Dennis King, John Barrymore, Jr. (acting); with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1864) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Tosca*—Scarpia Duet (sung by Caniglia, Borgioli and Mazziotti; acted by Fontaine, Erickson and Weber); *Traviata*—Ah! Fors' e Lui (sung by Albanese; acted by Brooks); *Il Trovatore*—Tace la notte placida (sung by Milanov; acted by Anderson); *Don Giovanni*—Madamina, il catalogo (sung by Pinza; acted by King); *Boheme*—Sono andati? (sung by Albanese and di Stefano; acted by Brooks and Barrymore, Jr.).

In our July 1954 issue we announced the first volume of *Arias Sung and Acted* and we wished it all success in its avowed purpose of introducing opera to those whose interest was slowed due to the language barrier. Evidently RCA Victor felt that the success of Volume I warranted another volume, and here it is. As before, these are not distorted versions either of the aria or of the theatre; they are done straight—the singing just as it would be done on any other operatic disc, the acting just as it might be done on the stage. The acting precedes the singing in each case.

Both singing and acting are superb.

VOCAL



The Confederacy, 1861-1865. Florence Kopleff (mezzo-soprano); Thomas Pyle (baritone); Cantata Choir of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation and the National Gallery Orchestra conducted by Richard Bales; with the Rev. Edmund Jennings Lee (narrator). 4-10" discs in album (C-M-1111) \$10. 4-7" discs in album (C-A-1111) \$10. 1-12" disc in album (*C-SL-220) \$10.

Columbia's excursion into the past with its album *The Confederacy* (based on music of the South during the Civil War) will prove to be the surprise of the year for many; frankly, we approached it with great trepidation, which proved needless.

Hardly any research had been done on music of the Confederacy in spite of the fact that the Civil War has been called the best documented of wars; the present album, then, should prove a much needed reference for the student, if nothing else. But it is much more, mostly because of the very fine taste of its editors and performers; it is entertaining. Briefly, the auditory part consists of eight songs, a march, and a reading of Gen. Lee's Farewell Order to the Army of Northern Virginia (originally given at Appomattox Court House on 10 April 1865, beautifully read by the Rev. Edmund Jennings Lee, a fourth generation descendant of Robert E.).

To judge the music by esthetic standards would be

manifestly unfair, for it is music of the period, which music was never intended to be anything other than popular. There are "catchy" tunes (*The Yellow Rose of Texas*, *Bonnie Blue Flag*), a sentimental ballad (*Lorena*), and three maudlin songs (*All Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight*, *The Conquered Flag*, *Somebody's Darling*) along with *For Bales* (same tune as "When Johnny Comes Marching Home") and *Dixie*. *General Lee's Grand March* is no *Stars and Stripes Forever*, but it belongs in this set, historically.

The tasteful and carefully worked out arrangements have been handled by Richard Bales, who is in charge of music at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. The literary and pictorial portion of the album is very deluxe, comprising some 32 pages replete with photographs, essays and documents—easily as enjoyable as the record itself. Dealers report considerable interest in this set, even north of the Mason-Dixon line, and Columbia is certainly to be congratulated on its enterprise and (it seems to us) fortitude in issuing an album which, handled in any other way than that in which it was handled, might not have been the commercial success we feel it deserves and which it will receive, unless our reporters do inform us falsely. It is available in all three speeds so that any school may add this set to its library. W.

Six Centuries of Song. Roland Hayes (tenor) accompanied by Reginald Boardman (piano). 2-12" discs in box (*VAN-VRS-448/9) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: *Douce Dame Jolie* (Machaut); *L'Amour de Moi*, *Le Tambourin* (arr. Tiersot); *Maledetto Sia l'Aspetto* (Monteverdi); *Amarilli* (Caccini); *Alma del Core* (Caldara); *Alone I Live* (arr. Pearce); *Mein Freund sich wol meren* (from the Lochamer Liederbuch); *Die Rechte Stimmung* (Telemann); *Bist du bei mir* (Bach); *Xango* (harm. Villa-Lobos); *Lit'l Girl*, *Lit'l Girl! Yes, Mam!* (arr. Hayes); *Roun' About de Mountain* (arr. Hayes); *Lit'l Boy* (arr. Hayes); *He Never Said a Mumberlin' Word* (arr. Hayes); *Plenty Good Room* (arr. Hayes); *Were You There?* (arr. Hayes); *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* (arr. Hayes); *Der Jungling an der Quelle* (Schubert); *Sehnsucht kennt* (Beethoven); *Die Liebe hat gelogen* (Schubert); *Der Musensohn* (Schubert); *Absence* (Berlioz); *Le Faune* (Debussy); *Song of Solomon* (Moussorgsky); *Pity a Po' Boy* (arr. James); *O Le' Me Shine* (arr. Parham); *Too Late* (arr. Hayes); *Ezekiel Saw de Wheel* (arr. Hayes); *O Mary Don' You Weep* (arr. Hayes); *Good News* (arr. Hayes); *Every Time I Feel the Spirit* (arr. Brown); *Po' Pilgrim* (arr. Hayes); *As One People* (arr. Hayes).

It is difficult (and, perhaps, not necessary or even advisable) to try to separate Roland Hayes, the singer, from Roland Hayes, the man; both are equally great and, ten or fifteen years ago, the thought would never have occurred to the writer. But now, at the age of 67, Mr. Hayes has made two LP discs, comprising some thirty-four songs, half of which are "art songs," the remaining half Aframerican songs, principally

spirituals. Now one has nothing but admiration for the man; and for the 67 year old voice, only amazement—but it is a voice that has seen better days, judged by purely vocal standards. It is here, however, that Roland Hayes, the man, intrudes—his intelligence, his musicianship and sure artistry are such that on many occasions one forgets the worn voice and is caught up in the web of magic the singer weaves. It is, at times, an uncanny experience.

The art songs are, in the main successful. "Outstanding" is the word for most of the old French songs and the evergreen *Amarilli*. It is in the more "modern" art songs, beginning with Schubert and including the Berlioz (which suffers from a lack of its proper orchestral accompaniment) that this listener had a few doubts. The Debussy and Moussorgsky songs are trifles, but superbly done.

The spirituals and Aframerican work songs completely captivated the writer and his family, none of whom were ever partial to this sort of music. It is incredible what Roland Hayes does with such songs as *Every Time I Feel the Spirit*, *Plenty Good Room*, and even the old war horse, *Swing Low Sweet Chariot*. Added to these are superb (an overworked word, but used here with sincerity) versions of many less familiar, at least to one listener, songs such as *Good News*; *Pity a Po' Boy*; *O Le' Me Shine* and *O Mary Don' You Weep*.

One is happy that Mr. Hayes was so fortunate as to have Vanguard record him, for it has done a splendid job from all angles. Technically one could not ask for more; artistically it has made a most attractive package, complete with notes, texts and pictures. It is a fine tribute to a great singer and a great man. W.

Kenny Baker Sings Favorite Hymns. Kenny Baker (tenor) with Ruth Willey Anderson (organ). 1-10" disc (*INTERNATIONAL 10051) \$3.65.

CONTENTS: *Beyond the Sunset*; *No Night There*; *His Eye Is on the Sparrow*; *My Father Watches Over Me*; *The Old Rugged Cross*; *In the Garden*; *I Love to Tell the Story*; *Softly and Tenderly*.

Favorite Hymns. The Rangers Quartet. 1-10" disc (*INTERNATIONAL 10045) \$3.65.

CONTENTS: *In My Father's House*; *I Have a Desire*; *Lily of the Valley*; *Sho Do Need Him Now*; *My Lord and I*; *Telephone Upstairs*; *This Little Heart of Mine*; *Rock of Ages*, *Hide Thou Me* (with Arnold Hyles, bass).

Choral Favorites. The International Choraleers with Instrumental Ensemble. 1-10" disc (*INTERNATIONAL 10019) \$3.65.

CONTENTS: *Battle of Jericho*; *On the Jericho Road*; *My God and I*; *Open the Gates of the Temple*; *Keep in the Middle of the Road*; *We Shall Walk the Valley of Peace*; *Ride the Chariot*; *Ezekiel Saw the Wheel*.

We have often been told by those who have their

fingers on the pulse of the record business that there is no small demand for sacred records (gospel hymns, spirituals, etc.); and if you've ever tried to buy any, you have no doubt found that it is a highly specialized business—few shops seem to know very much about this sort of record, and it is hard to find what the major companies have issued along these lines.

With this in mind, we are happy to report that the Christian Artists Recording Corp. have recently issued a catalog of International Sacred Records, of which the above three LP's are samples. It is an extremely varied catalog, listing discs on all three speeds; some are vocal, some instrumental, and if you are interested in hymns, we'd venture to say that you would surely find many items of interest in this catalog. Judging from the three samples we have before us, we'd say the artists are quite adequate and the recording very hi-fi (you may want to turn your treble control down slightly on the Kenny Baker).

A copy of this catalog may be obtained gratis from the publisher of this bulletin.



MISCELLANEOUS

Accordions Pops Concert. Charlie Magnante (accordion). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1013) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Sabre Dance* (Khachaturian); *12th Street Rag*; *Minute Waltz*; *Pavane*; *La Cumparsita*; *Don't Blame Me*; *Hezrakati*; *Gavotte* (from "Classical" Symphony) (Prokofiev).

Music Boxes of Long Ago. Swiss and American Music Boxes from the 19th Century Collection of George and Madeleine Brown. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1012) \$4.

Voice of the Sea. A Collection of Many Sounds Relating to the Sea and Those Who Travel upon It. 1-12" disc (*SOT-5011) \$4.80. (HF).

Charlie Magnante has been making records 10, these many years, and the present LP takes us back quite a way; the photo on the jacket of this disc indicates that Charlie has only ten fingers, but you'll think differently when you hear this one.

Music boxes, of course, antedate the phonograph, and it was largely due to the phonograph that music boxes became things of the past. Which makes it curious that now some folks seem to want records of music boxes. If you do, here is a very fine one.

The Road Recording by Sounds of our Times entitled *Voice of the Sea* should not be confused with the Folkways LP called *Sounds of the Sea* (*FOLK-X-121, TNR May '52) which captured the sounds of marine animal life. The present one contains sounds relating to the sea: the whistle of the *Queen Mary*, sounds in the wheelhouse of the *USS Columbus* ("All engines ahead one-third, steady as you go"), bells, Quoddy Head horn, and several types of surf textures (foamy, pebbly beach, rocky cliffs, etc.). It is a binaural record, which means

that each side contains the same thing twice; if you have a binaural instrument, you will know what this means, if you don't, it suffices to say that you need only play the first half of each side. As indicated in the heading (HF), this is a hi-fi Road Recording. We do not understand the strange fascination these sounds held for us, but it is almost the same sort of fascination as one feels in watching a pounding surf.

The Zither. Ruth Welcome (zither). One side, and **The Cimbalom.** Dick Marta (cimbalom). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1032) \$4.

CONTENTS: *The Happy Dancing Rose*; *Green-sleeves*; *Two Little Stars*; *Deep Down in the Valley*; *Barbara Allen*; *The River Seine*; *September Song* (zither). *Hungarian Dance No. 8* (Brahms); *Roumanian Rhapsody*; *Traditional Czardas Group* (cimbalom).

Cimbalom Melodies. Josef Moskovici (cimbalom). 1-10" disc (*ROMANY RR-LP-2) \$3.95.

"Ruth Welcome," the jacket notes tell us on this recent Cook Sounds of our Times release, "(was) the first to play contemporary songs (*September Song*, *River Seine*) as well as the traditional European folk music (on the zither)." Because of this, "... she is distinct among zither players in repertoire." She sounds good to us, not being a connoisseur of zither players.

The zither differs from the cimbalom in that the zither is plucked by the fingers, while the cimbalom is struck with mallets; to the casual listener they sound quite a bit alike. Both Messrs. Marta and Moskovici seem to know their way around a cimbalom, and both the Cook and the Romany disc have very fine reproduction, Cook a little more brittle, Romany slightly more mellow.

Cante Flamenco (Vol. I). Flamenco Singers with guitar accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5303) \$5.95.

Cante Flamenco (Vol. II). Flamenco Singers with guitar accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5304) \$5.95.

Westminster now has worthy successors to its now famous *Joys and Sorrows of Andalusia* (TNR Oct. '52) which caused quite a stir when it first appeared and is still a steady seller. An hour and a half of this shouting, castanet clicking, stamping and guitar strumming is an awful lot to take at one sitting for lots of persons, but it is all good, all authentic, and really exciting to those who understand it.

(6) **Hungarian Czardas.** Michel, the Paganini of the Cafes. 1-10" disc (*ROMANY RR-LP-1) \$3.95.

(9) **Gypsy Songs and Czardas.** Antal Koczé and his Gypsies. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3013) \$3.95.

Gypsy Music. Famous Gypsy Orchestras of Bucharest, Roumania. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3092) \$4.85.

Readers of THE NEW RECORDS are familiar both with Antal Koczé and Michel (see TNR Oct. '53);

the MGM disc here offers far greater variety, everything from *Morning Bird* by the Barbu Lauturu Orchestra to the *Youth Dance* by the Symphony Orchestra of Bucharest. The Romany and the Westminster discs are of the more intimate type of gypsy music; if the exciting music of the Gypsies is what you are looking for, try the MGM.

The Trombone. Gabriel Masson (trombone) with piano accompaniments, and Le Quatuor de Trombones de Paris. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-989) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Petite Suite pour Trombone* (Baudo); *Danse sacrée—Danse profane* (Defay) (trombone & pf.). *Suite pour Quatre Trombones* (Massis); *Quator de Trombones* (Dondeyne) (Paris Trombone Quartet).

The Clarinet. Ulysse Delecluse (clarinet) accompanied by Jacques Delecluse (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-987) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Erwin Fantaisie* (Meister); *Variations sur un air du pays d'Oc* (Cahuzac); *Introduction et rondo* (Widor); *Solo pour clarinette et piano* (Messager).

The Trumpet. Raymond Sabarich (trumpet) and Louis Ménardi (trumpet) accompanied by Marthe Lenom (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-988) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Lamento* (Sabarich and Rolland); *Aubade* (Sabarich) (Sabarich, trumpet). *Sicilienne et tambourin* (Thilde); *Sérénade fantasque* (Thilde); *Sonate* (Hubeau) (Menardi, trumpet).

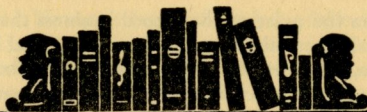
We don't know who convinced whom, but somehow London Gramophone and Henri Selmer got together and decided that it would be a good idea to make records demonstrating various techniques in the playing of Selmer instruments to the student. The resulting discs are listed above.

The music on these discs isn't much, *per se*. As examples for the student to imitate, however, the discs should be of great value. A thumbnail history of each instrument, a brief biography of each of the artists, and a description of the music make up the adequate jacket notes.

An Evening with Andrés Segovia. Andrés Segovia (guitar). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9733) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Aria and Corrente* (Frescobaldi); *Capriccio Diabolico* (Castelnuovo-Tedesco); (6) *Preludes* (Ponce); *Minuet* (Rameau); *Cavatina* (Tansman); *Nocturno* (Tórroba).

Decca has just released a new LP by Andrés Segovia. Period.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, GSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø Indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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JANUARY, 1955

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

A SET OF RECORDS of interest to students of the violin has been announced called "Young Violinist's Editions," recorded by Remington Records under the supervision of Theodore and Alice Pashkus, renowned violin pedagogues. Three volumes are now available; we will describe Volume I, which will illustrate the principles involved, and then simply list the other two volumes.

Volume I is Viotti's *Concerto No. 23 in G*, and the package contains a 12-inch LP disc with the concerto played once on each side: on side one an "A" is sounded on the piano, and then the piano part (really the part for orchestra in this work) is played prominently (by Otto Schulhof) with the violin part (played by Jan Shermont) played very softly, almost at a whisper. The student is supposed to play the violin part from the score (also included in the package) to the piano accompaniment supplied by the record, and he can hear the correct notes in the background to sort of nudge him if he makes a mistake. On side two the work is re-played, this time with both violin and piano equally prominent, so the student can hear what he should sound like.

A piano score is, of course, included along with the violin score. More, there is a book of "Special Preparatory Exercises" which, we presume, will assist the student to play the work better. Now, of course, these discs will not teach you to play the violin; but we should think they would benefit the student now taking lessons, and they will provide expert piano accompaniment for him in the home for his continued practice, as well as recorded demonstrations of expert violin technique.

Volume II contains *Scène de Ballet, Op. 100* (Beriot); *Hejre Kati, Scène de la Csarda* (Hubay); and *Cavatino, Op. 85, No. 3* (Raff). Volume III contains *Concertino No. 1 in A*

minor (Accolay); *Concertino in D, Op. 22* (Seitz); and *Concertino No. 1 in A minor* (Ortmans). The price of each volume is \$5.95 complete; if your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

* * *

Record buyers were no doubt heartened at RCA Victor's sudden announcement of greatly reduced prices on its LP records—in some cases as much as 40%. Word arrived at our studio just as we were going to press; and since we fully expected that this announcement would have some effect on the prices of other makes of records, we delayed this issue a couple of days in order to show the latest possible prices of all makes. Readers may be certain that the prices shown in this issue are the ones in effect at the minute of actually going on the press. So far, at this writing, the following manufacturers have announced price reductions: RCA Victor, Columbia, London, Epic, Urania, and MGM.

One other observation is that we fully expect a temporary shortage to occur of the records recently reduced; the whole thing happened so suddenly that the pressing plants were caught short. We are sure that the situation will right itself as quickly as possible, but it will be well to have patience with your dealer, who may be temporarily out of some numbers until the factories can get caught up.

* * *

We regret the necessity of placing a most timely record, one which should prove of interest to a great many of our readers, under the heading of *DICTION*, which customarily falls so far back in our little bulletin. The title of the disc is *The Investigator*, and because of the possibility of its being missed, due to its location in this issue, we are calling it to your attention in this place.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-two years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning January 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Sibelius: Symphony No. 3 in C, Op. 52. One side, and **Sibelius: Symphony No. 7 in C, Op. 105.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1008) \$3.98.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 4 in A minor, Op. 63. One and one-half sides, and **Sibelius: Pohjola's Daughter, Op. 49** (Symphonic Fantasia). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1059) \$3.98.

After the success of Collins' *First* and *Second* Sibelius symphony recordings, London has lost no time in having him do three more; Nos. 5 and 6 will no doubt be forthcoming. Ehrling and the Stockholm Radio Symphony have made a complete set for Mercury; although they are well recorded, most folks with hi-fi sets will agree that the London discs are better. As to interpretation, Collins provides more colorful and dramatic readings. Collins and Ehrling are the only two who have recorded the *Third*; they and Von Karajan have done the *Fourth*; Barbirolli, Beecham and a couple of others have done the *Seventh*. Collins can hold his own with any of them and has the best of it, reproduction-wise. So if you are considering housing all the Sibelius symphonies in your library, you will find the Collins discs about your best bet—assuming the *Fifth* and *Sixth* appear in a reasonable time.

The *Third* and *Seventh* pair together nicely on an LP, being shorter works. No. 3 is in three movements, and departs from the romantic thinking of the two previous symphonies. It is prevailingly gay and light; the *Seventh* is not so light and gay and, being a one movement work, does not reveal its content as readily. Collins gets well beneath the surface of both works in these performances.

The *Fourth Symphony* saw Sibelius in a complete rebellion against the romantic era; he described this symphony as "a protest against the compositions of today. Nothing, absolutely nothing, of the circus about it." He was thinking along the lines of some

other composers referred to as modern, who were merely thinking of something new and un-romantic in style. Sibelius, like them, was concerned very much with form, musical patterns and orchestral sonorities, achieving them with a more direct method and with greater simplicity and clearer orchestration than his immediate predecessors. For these reasons the *Fourth* is a remarkable work, not nearly so forbidding as might be indicated. The second side filler, *Pohjola's Daughter*, is a richly scored tone poem, completed in 1926, a repertoire favorite, well turned by Collins and the recording engineers. S.

Thomson: (3) Pictures for Orchestra. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Virgil Thomson. One side, and **Thomson: (5) Songs from William Blake.** Mack Harrell (baritone) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*CML-4919) \$4.98.

American composer Virgil Thomson now has about a dozen of his compositions recorded on five different company labels. We have liked nearly all that we have heard, and hold Thomson in high regard not only as a composer, but also as one of the best music critics whose columns we have read. The *Three Pictures for Orchestra* are titled "The Seine at Night," "Wheat Field at Noon," and "Sea Piece with Birds." These evocative tone poems are heavily laden with an atmosphere that paints the pictures nicely and provides enjoyable listening. Thomson handles the orchestral palette with great skill, and some of his efforts show the hand of a sure master. He is indeed fortunate in having the Philadelphia Orchestra to carry off his wishes so expertly—an orchestra which he openly admires above all others and one which obviously regards him affectionately, judging by the wonderful performance it gives him. It is interesting to compare his *Sea Piece* to Debussy's *La Mer* in portraying sea sounds; our favorite among the three pictures is *The Seine at Night*, a delicately colored work of good substance.

About the *Five Songs from William Blake*, composed for Mack Harrell's voice. Mr. Thomson has written: "It was my hope in selecting these poems to give a compact but complete view of Blake's philosophy. I did not attempt to include his prophetic ideas, as expounded in the hermetic writings." The titles of the five poems are: *The Divine Image*, *Tiger! Tiger!*, *The Land of Dreams*, *The Little Black Boy*, and *"And Did Those Feet."* The texts are supplied on the jacket notes. Every one of these poems is set to music that fits it like a glove. Thomson does not indulge in repetition of text and has spun melodic lines of surpassing beauty many times. The accompaniments for orchestra are works of art in themselves, and Ormandy, as usual, supplies a background of perfect proportion. Mack Harrell sings these songs with all the artistry at his command, which is plenty indeed. His diction is admirable; one hardly needs the printed texts. Here is American vocal music of which we may be proud. S.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ◊ Indicates 45 rpm.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. One and one-half sides, and **Franck: Le Chasseur Maudit.** Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5311) \$5.95.

It is good to have Artur Rodzinski back on the recording scene again; many of his earlier Columbia recordings were excellent, and we presume Westminster has some choice repertoire plums lined up for him. The present recording is one that will appeal to many who like this symphony, for it is a large-scaled, full-blown, romantic reading, which unleashes vast crescendos and surges of tone. It is just the sort of performance which many find to their taste when hearing this particular work. Rodzinski does not indulge in distortions of tempo to achieve these effects; we would say his reading is rather straight and conventional, but it is enormous in scope. The orchestra plays superbly for him. Westminster parallels his reading with reproduction that is high, wide, and handsome, clean and clear. There is nice sweetness and brilliance in the upper range.

What position this disc would be assigned in the line-up of Franck *Symphony* LP's is no easy matter to determine. It could well claim first place among those done in the lush, traditional vein. Another traditional reading, though with far greater refinement, is the recent Furtwängler (*L-LL-967) although Westminster's reproduction is brighter. The most absorbing performance is the Paray reading (*ME-MG-50023); there are also a couple of others of merit in the lists.

Westminster is more generous than its competitors, for we also find a nicely detailed reading of *The Accursed Huntsman* on this disc. Franck's bright, narrative tone-poem makes a good filler. The only other company which offers a coupling for the symphony is London, with Franck's *Symphonic Variations*, both conducted by Münch (*L-LL-464). That is the way it stands at this time, but there will be more Franck *Symphony* LP's; we will leave room to change our minds again within the next few months. S.

Ravel: Bolero. One side, and **Ravel: Pavane pour une Infante défunte.** And **Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin.** L'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35102TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35102) \$5.95.

Ravel: Bolero. And **Ravel: La Valse.** One side, and **Ravel: Valses nobles et sentimentales.** And **Ravel: Alborada del Gracioso.** And **Ravel: Pavane pour une Infante défunte.** L'Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by Pedro de Freitas Branco. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5297) \$5.95.

In spite of the fact that Angel does not give as much for the money as does Westminster (Westminster gets both *Bolero* and *La Valse* on one side, Angel leaves nearly a third of side one blank), we must confess a decided preference for the Angel. The Westminster is very strident and steely; the Angel is smooth and lush, much more natural-sounding. If you

wish just *La Valse* and *Bolero*, Ormandy and the Philadelphians offer a bargain package (*C-AL-51, TNR Nov. '54).

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Members of the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. One and one-half sides, and **Sounds of Nature.** Described by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1830) \$3.98.

The "Sounds of Nature" on part of this disc occupies less than one inch of inside record grooves, takes but a short time and can be eliminated from the playing of the symphony if you so wish it. There are no nature sounds during the playing of the symphony. Stokowski, in the short section at the end, tells how well Beethoven depicted nature sounds, bird calls, and the like, then gives an illustration of the actual sounds, plays a section from the symphony which shows Beethoven's imitation of the sounds, and then plays the two simultaneously. The only part we did not care for was the simultaneous playing, which sounded rather hashy and pointless; otherwise the idea is clever and proved rather well that Beethoven did better with musical instruments than nature herself with the actual sounds, as far as music is concerned. Beethoven purists may dislike the whole thing roundly; but those who like spoken musical commentary with illustrations will find this very interesting—and no one is better at it than Stokowski.

As for the playing of the symphony, again Beethoven purists may find a few things to carp about, but music lovers generally will find this one of the most beautifully played and superbly recorded *Pastoral Symphony* LP's on the market. The articulation of the woodwinds is exquisite, the tone of the generally dull-toned NBC Orchestra comes to blooming life under Stokowski's hand. Stokowski has always had a fondness for the *Pastoral* and has had good success playing it over these many years. We thoroughly enjoyed this beautiful performance and magnificent reproduction, and we do not hesitate to recommend it highly. RCA Victor's quiet surfaces are a great aid in music as delicate and quiet as this. S.

French Orchestral Music. L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3058) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Le Festin de l'Araignée*, Op. 17 (Roussel); *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faun* (Debussy); *L'Apprenti sorcier* (Dukas); *Summer Pastorale* (Honegger); *Pavane*, Op. 50 (Fauré).

We are going to coin a new phrase: horse chestnuts. The phrase will refer to chestnuts too tough to swallow. *The Afternoon of a Faun* and *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* are horse chestnuts; and one is on one side of this record and one on the other—which is a pity, because the other works are not so well known.

Now, if the manufacturers feel that they must include a horse chestnut or two in an LP collection, let

them put the H. C.'s on one side and the interesting items on the reverse, so the musically adventurous may at least have one side straight through.

The Roussel, Honegger and the Fauré are decidedly worth while and are well done; we didn't listen to the horse chestnuts.

Tchaikovsky: Sleeping Beauty Ballet, Op. 66. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Adolf Fritz Guhl. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7127) \$3.98.

Rossini—arr. Respighi: La Boutique Fantasque. One and one-half sides, and **Mendelssohn: Song without Words, Op. 67, No. 4 ("Spinning Song").** And **Mendelssohn: Song without Words, Op. 62, No. 6 ("Spring Song").** And **Gounod: Mors et Vita—Judex.** And **Delibes: Naila—Intermezzo.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Nicolai Malko. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1080) \$2.98.

Unless you wish a more detailed account of the score, we suggest that if you are interested in *The Sleeping Beauty* you choose von Karajan's performance on Angel, backed with *The Swan Lake* (*ANG-35006, TNR Jan. '54).

RCA Victor's Bluebird series is making a lot of friends these days, for it offers some mighty fine performances at bargain prices. A good example is the present *La Boutique Fantasque*, a most satisfying reading with excellent fidelity. We still prefer Ansermet (*L-LL-274, TNR Apr. '51) and still feel it is worth the difference; but Irving is good, make no mistake; and his little "dividends" are charming and make appropriate fillers.

Dvorák: (10) Legends, Op. 59. Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4920) \$3.98.

In August 1951 "S" labeled Urania's LP of six of Dvorák's (10) *Legends* as "undistinguished"; however, he also called the orchestra by the same name. We are forced to report that it was not the undistinguished orchestra's fault; the *Legends* are still so, even under the baton of Thomas Scherman with Columbia's best reproduction. There are moments here, but not enough of them.

Schubert: Symphony No. 1 in D. One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 2 in B-flat.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4903) \$3.98.

Sir Thomas wisely does not try to make these two symphonies any greater than they are, and they therefore emerge as successful performances of products of the 16- and 18-year-old Schubert: tuneful, bright but lightweight.

Offenbach: Bluebeard—Suite. One side, and **Offenbach: Helen of Troy—Suite.** Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8277) \$4.98.

To admirers of the tuneful ebullience of the music of Offenbach it need only be said that Joseph Levine

and the Ballet Theatre Orchestra perform these suites to perfection, and Capitol's reproduction mirrors their efforts with life-like fidelity.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15. Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4914) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37. Emil Gilels (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35131TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35131) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37. Emil Gilels (piano) with orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Concerto for Two Pianos in E-flat, K. 365.** Emil Gilels and Zak (pianos) with orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-601) \$5.95.

The Beethoven *First Concerto*, which was the second one he wrote, emerges magnificently from the hands of Serkin and Ormandy and the Philadelphians, a fact which one could suppose from these forces. Serkin's Beethoven is always something to command respect, and in this instance the pianist is in top form, and the accompaniment he receives is surely not bettered by any other phonographic conductor of the same work. Columbia's reproduction is fine, which puts this high on the list of LP's of this work, and for most folks it will be ahead of the others, the best of whom include Badura-Skoda, Giesekeing, and Gulda.

Serkin and Ormandy have also issued a Beethoven *Third Concerto* of recent vintage (*C-ML-4738) which won applause in these columns. We would still call it the best of those available. Emil Gilels is getting the phonographic build-up these days, and the Angel has taken up the cudgels with vigor. He is a good pianist, no two ways about it; and his reading of the Beethoven *Third* is admirable. The routine work of Cluytens adds nothing to the merit of this disc, and the reproduction inclines toward a hollowness, or lack of lustre, or something that does not warm the cockles of the hi-fi ear. One gets used to it; but following the Columbia reproduction, it was a bit of a let-down. This could place second, unless you favor another artist, such as Backhaus, Kraus, or Rubinstein.

The Angel recording occupies two sides of a 12" disc; the first movement on side one takes about 16½ minutes, the second side takes about 18 minutes. The Period record places part of the third movement on the first side, finishes the third movement on the second side, and continues with the Mozart concerto. Is that good value? It might have been, but it is far from it in this case. The Russians may claim to

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ♪ Indicates 45 rpm.

have invented nearly everything (except Beethoven), but if they invented the tape recorder, they stopped after the first crude model. This is atrocious sound. We did not bother to play this all the way through, it was that bad. Gilels' friend at the other piano in the Mozart is referred to, on the jacket and the record label, simply as Zak. We learned his probable full name is Thersites Zak, and the same source claims the orchestra to be the Moscow Radio Orchestra—and a wretched group of musicians they are. We have heard LP's that bear a price of one-third that asked for this one that yield a far more acceptable sound and a better musical experience. S.

Music of the Neapolitan School. Scarlatti Orchestra conducted by Franco Caracciolo. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35141TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35141) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sinfonia No. 5 in D minor, Concerto No. 3 in F (A. Scarlatti); Concerto for Two Flutes and Orchestra (Cimarosa); La Modista Raggratrice—Overture (Paisiello).*

Concertos and Sonatas of Vivaldi (Vol. II). Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute), Robert Gendre (violin), Pierre Pierlot (oboe), Paul Hongne (bassoon) and Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpischord). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-116) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Concerto for Five Instruments in F; Sonata for Flute and Harpsichord in C; Concerto for Flute, Violin and Bassoon in D; Sonata for Four Instruments in D (oboe, violin, bassoon, harpsichord); Concerto for Five Instruments in D.*

Here are two thoroughly enjoyable and, at the same time, educational discs. The Angel recording includes three composers, none of whom could be called well represented on LP records. Now with music as old as some of this (particularly the Scarlatti) it is sometimes necessary to "arrange" the old scores for modern orchestras and ears. This has been done in all instances on the Angel disc, but no information is given about either the music or the arranger's credentials. And why Cimarosa or Paisiello, who wrote in the late 18th century, need to be "revised" is open to question—questions that are not answered on the virtually non-existent sleeve notes. None the less, the music is delightful and, with the exception of the Paisiello overture, of considerable musical interest. Recorded sound is pretty good in the Scarlatti, on the poor side in the Cimarosa and Paisiello.

The real gem of the two records is, of course, the second volume of Vivaldi *Concertos and Sonatas*. Volume I appeared last year, and the writer praised it very highly in the February 1954 issue of THE NEW RECORDS. Everything that was written concerning Volume I may be repeated concerning the present issue. The fertility and imagination of Antonio Vivaldi are almost without precedent in the history of music, and that he is able to sustain musical in-

terest throughout these two volumes of music for combination of three to five instruments is a source of constant surprise and joy. Whether he writes for solo flute or the whole combination, every resource of the instrument's color, expressiveness and peculiar tonal quality is explored in masterful fashion.

The accompanying notes are, as is usually the case with the Haydn Society releases, informative and add immeasurably to the listener's enjoyment and knowledge. The recorded sound is brilliantly faithful and the amazing virtuosity of the instrumentalists comes through with stirring clarity. Better not miss this one; and pick up Volume I, if you don't have it. W.

Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1831) \$3.98.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. Johanna Martzy (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35137TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35137) \$5.95.

Those who have previously recorded the Brahms *First Piano Concerto* are up against stiff competition with Rubinstein; Johanna Martzy, who has just recorded the Brahms *Violin Concerto*, is bucking some powerful competition from many who have recorded it before. Rubinstein and Reiner are a fair match for Serkin, Curzon, and Backhaus; but Martzy has to face Heifetz, Menuhin, Milstein, and Stern, to say nothing of Oistrakh, Olevsky, and several others, including a fine fiddler of her own sex, Ida Haendel. Rubinstein has not the least trouble in getting to the head of the class with his magnificent reading of the elusive *First Concerto*, ably backed by Reiner. We cannot state a preference for this version to the Serkin and Szell version (*C-ML-4829), which impressed us greatly upon its recent release and still pleases us. Several friends who have heard this new Rubinstein recording claim it the greatest reading of them all; we admit that it may be. The reproduction of the Rubinstein-Reiner set is good, but we felt several times that a shade more prominence to the piano would not have been amiss. The quality, however, is excellent.

Thirty year old Johanna Martzy, the brilliant young Hungarian violinist, has carried off many awards for her playing and has concertized with great success throughout Europe. She is also exceptionally beautiful, judging by the several photos on the jacket covers; and that makes a fair critical analysis of her playing even more difficult. She is truly a player of unusual skill, as her execution of the rondo finale establishes from the opening bars. Her tone has not the breadth of some others, as can be noticed in the second movement adagio, and her poise can be shaken at least a hair's breadth here and there in the lengthy first movement. But it is an admirable

reading of the work, with a fine Philharmonia Orchestra accompaniment under Kletzki and with superb reproduction throughout. If you want a pretty girl to play your Brahms Concerto, here it is; we will take Milstein or one of the others (and maybe glance through *Esquire Magazine* while we listen to the disc). S.

Bach: Concerto in E. One side, and **Bach: Concerto in A minor.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1818) \$3.98.

Bach: Concerto in A minor. One side, and **Bach: Concerto in E.** Walter Barylli (violin) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5318) \$5.95.

Two new versions this month of the two surviving violin concertos of Bach. Which to choose? Well, in the first place we would choose one of the two present discs because of the coupling; the two concertos belong together, and none of the previous ones has both on one disc.

Now Heifetz is world-famous, and justly so. His ideas carry weight, to say the least. Since tempi are not marked on the scores of either concerto, the fact that he plays them more rapidly than Barylli should, in the absolute, have no bearing on the case. But the listener is not an absolute quantity, and whim and passion must impose themselves on one listening to a recorded performance. Because we never fail to find new substance in each performance of a Bach work, no matter how many times we have heard it before, and because a slightly slower tempo enables us to do this more easily, we will state a preference for Barylli.

One prefers the more prominent placing of the harpsichords in the orchestra on the Westminster disc; there are harpsichords in the accompaniment on the Victor LP, but you have to strain to catch them. Both discs offer fine reproduction, Westminster slightly more revealing and brilliant, Victor more lush.

Walter Barylli has been, since 1938, concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic and in 1945 founded the Barylli Quartet, well known for its recorded performances on Westminster. J.

Mozart: Concerto in C, K. 314. One side, and **J. C. Bach: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat—Andante.** And **Bach: Cantata No. 156—Arioso.** And **Bach: Concerto in C minor for Violin and Oboe—Adagio.** Mitchell Miller (oboe) with the Sondheim Little Symphony conducted by Daniel Saindenberg. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4916) \$3.98.

This LP disc is for lovers of the oboe and particularly for admirers of Mitchell Miller's supreme dexterity on this difficult instrument. (Mr. Miller wears another hat with the name "Mitch" Miller on it; when he wears this hat, he selects and records

pop tunes for Columbia, such as *This Old House*, with Rosemary Clooney, currently sweeping the country).

But this disc features Mitchell Miller, oboist extraordinary. His sympathetic rendition of Mozart's exquisite and droll *Concerto for Oboe* is above reproach, and he does the three shorter works on the reverse side in a manner befitting both his and the composers' talents.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. David Oistrakh (violin) with the Saxon State Orchestra conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9754) \$3.98.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. Christian Ferras (violin) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-L-1046) \$3.98.

The last time we heaped praise on a Brahms *Violin Concerto* recording was for the recent issue by Milstein (*CL-P-8271), a reading considered by many to be the finest thing Milstein ever committed to discs. We had also expressed admiration for the disc by the young fiddler, Olevsky, and had expressed a rather pronounced dislike for the Oistrakh recordings of this work. With these two discs appearing on the scene, there is still no change in the line-up of who is best in our opinion, but we must admit that Oistrakh is not so far down the list. There seems to be more warmth and humanity in this performance than in the previous one. This could well be pushing the top were it not for the reproduction, which is not of today's best. Violinists and fans of Oistrakh will want this disc, even so, for the exceptional example of virtuosity and sound musicianship to be heard; and the reproduction is not bad—it will sound good on average equipment—it just is not super 1954 hi-fi.

Christian Ferras's effort is just that: it seems to be an effort, at least after hearing Oistrakh breeze through the rough passages. Ferras is, no doubt, a mighty fine fiddler, but like all contestants in a race, there is only one winner, and Ferras is not the winner. He has a feeling for the work, and he is good technically, but he is not as silky smooth as Oistrakh, Milstein, Heifetz and lot of others we could name. Double the pity, for London has recorded this set with devastating fidelity; the violin sounds like it is at your elbow, and the orchestra is not lost in the set-up either. Now if London has recorded Oistrakh, we might have a different ending to the story; as it stands now, the blue ribbon is still on Milstein. S.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 5 in F, Op. 103. Magda Tagliaferro (piano) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. One side, and **Franck: Variations Symphoniques.** And **Fauré: Ballade, Op. 19.** Jean Doyen (piano) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3057) \$3.98.

NOTE: for review of this disc see under PIANO.

* Indicates L.P. 33 1/3 rpm.
 () Indicates 45 rpm.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Three Italian Masters. Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-2) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto Grosso in D, Op. 6, No. 4* (Corelli); *Concerto in F for Oboe and Strings* (Vivaldi); *Symphony in D, Op. 18, No. 2* (Clementi).

The growing interest in "old" music, that is music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is a source of real satisfaction to the writer, who is prejudiced to the extent that he is passionately fond of this period himself. Such men as Vivaldi, Corelli, Galuppi, and Marcello in the south and Buxtehude, Böhm, Walther, Handel and Bach in the north have given us a wealth of music that has not, except by few composers, even been touched. A further good sign is that more and more effort is being made to restore the music honestly and to perform it as closely to the original manner as is possible today.

Such a disc as the present one by the Virtuosi di Roma is a shining example of what can be done. Two of the works on the record are baroque masters. The Corelli *Concerto* is a beautiful work, serene, melodious and, in every sense of the word, great music. Just to listen to it is to realize how far we, of the vaunted Twentieth Century, have moved down the musical ladder. But one should thank God for Corelli and not be like Aldous Huxley's man who, instead of thanking God for the automobile, only cursed when the carburetor went bad. The Vivaldi *Oboe Concerto* is also a gem, on a little lower inspirational plane than the Corelli, but a work of genius none the less. As for the Clementi *Symphony*, here one is confronted with the work of a man whose music is virtually unknown outside of some piano studies. The *Symphony in D* is a masterpiece, a work of art that looks back on the baroque and forward to the romantic.

The Virtuosi di Roma are not new to records, but they have never enjoyed reproduction such as has been accorded them on this disc—it is perfect in every respect. Another word for the package, which is a beautiful album with a heavy cellophane window, behind which is a painting of the Madonna and Child by Carlo Crivelli—this in itself is as lovely as the music. The modest price tag for all this should place it in every library. There are excellent notes by Robert Biancolli that add much to the understanding and enjoyment of the music. W.

Mendelssohn: Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 13.

One side, and Mendelssohn: *Quartet No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 44, No. 3.* New Music String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4921) \$4.98.

First (LP) recordings of two of Mendelssohn's string quartets arrived this month, performed by the New Music String Quartet, whose previous discs have been devoted almost exclusively to works of

modern composers. These gentlemen, however, obviously know their way around in this music; their playing is spirited.

The *A minor Quartet* was written when Mendelssohn was 18 years old; the *E-flat* followed it by a little over ten years. It must be said that if the former marked Mendelssohn's maturity as a composer, the latter is representative of him at the peak of his powers. In the *A minor*, Mendelssohn seems to be writing for four instruments, while in the *E-flat* he is writing for a quartet; at least, this is our impression.

Don't be fooled by the grooving on side two; the *Quartet No. 5* is really in four movements (as is *Quartet No. 2*), and there are short pauses between each; but because it is a tight squeeze to get the whole opus on one side, Columbia did not place bands between movements, as it did for *Quartet No. 2*.

Schubert: Quintet in A, Op. 114 ("The Trout").

Members of the Guilet String Quartet with Menahem Pressler (piano) and Philip Sklar (double bass). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3128) \$3.98.

Schubert: Quintet in A, Op. 114 ("The Trout").

Adrian Aeschbacher (piano), Rudolph Koeckert (violin), Oskar Riedl (viola), Josef Merz (violin-cello) and Franz Ortner (double bass). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9707) \$3.98.

Schubert: Quintet in A, Op. 114 ("The Trout").

Amsterdam Piano Quintet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3046) \$3.98.

Either because of, or in spite of, its unusual instrumentation (piano, violin, viola, cello and double-bass), the *Trout Quintet* remains the most popular of Schubert's chamber works (although partisans of the *Death and the Maiden Quartet* would probably argue with us on this point). Written in the Austrian Alps in 1819 while Schubert was on a vacation, this sunny, untroubled work transmits to the hearer the easy-going life that the composer was enjoying at the time.

Whether it was an attempt to "soften" the cumbersome bass viol or not, the Decca version is clearly out of the running, as *Trouts* go; the reproduction is not bright. So far as the present three go, then, the choice is between the MGM and the Epic; it is a toss-up, and we'd nominate the MGM solely on the basis of the price difference. We call your attention, though, to a very fine version on Westminster (*WEST-WL-5025, TNR Feb. '51), featuring the competent Badura-Skoda on piano; this version also merits consideration in making your selection.

Bloch: Sonata. One side, and **Handel: Sonata No. 6**

in E. And Schubert: *Sonatina in G minor, Op. 137, No. 3.* Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1861) \$3.98.

"Violin sonatas fall roughly into two categories—those that fit well into a program and those around which a program must be fitted. The *Sonata* by

... Bloch belongs in the second division. It is not a work to be taken casually, either by performers or their audiences." Thus RCA Victor commences its jacket notes on this disc.

Maybe so, so far as the concert stage is concerned; but surely, sirs, not on records. One doesn't need to "fit" a program on records. You have a series made to order for this work: the LRM-7000-series, 10" LP's at \$2.98. No need to assume that one who'd want the Bloch Sonata would also like the Handel and the Schubert; and don't excuse yourself by indicating that the disc is a program of "the three main divisions of contemporary concert repertoire—the classic, the romantic and the modern." True, you call this a Heifetz recital; but Heifetz is living and has not retired; there will be a time for a Heifetz memorial disc, but this is not it.

If, gentle reader, you happen to be interested in all of these selections, Heifetz is at his best and Emanuel Bay supplies accompaniments that rank with the tops.

Haydn: (6) Quartets, Op. 76 (complete). Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-203) \$14.94.

CONTENTS: Quartet in G, Op. 76, No. 1 and Quartet in D minor, Op. 76, No. 2 ("Quintellen"). (*C-ML-4922) \$4.98.

Quartet in C, Op. 76, No. 3 ("Emperor") and Quartet in B-flat, Op. 76, No. 4 ("Sunrise"). (*C-ML-4923) \$4.98.

Quartet in D, Op. 76, No. 5 and Quartet in E-flat, Op. 76, No. 6. (*C-ML-4924) \$4.98.

We don't recall receiving a set of records before which had so many good omens promising its success. This album has everything in its favor.

Firstly, although all of Haydn's Quartets are lovely and easy to like, none have achieved the popularity of the six of Op. 76. Secondly, the Budapest Quartet is generally regarded as the top string quartet in the world; few critics would leave its name out of the first three of their preference. Thirdly, the Budapest Quartet plays the marvelous Stradivarius instruments of the Gertrude Clarke Whittall Foundation (see TNR Nov. '52 for review of the complete Beethoven Quartets by this group on these instruments). And lastly, the performances were recorded in the Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress, the acoustics of which seem just right for these works.

It is a pleasure, therefore, to report that the set lives up, in every way, to our high expectations.



OPERA

Bizet: Les Pêcheurs de Perles (excerpts). One side and **Gounod: Mireille (excerpts).** Janine Micheau (soprano), soloists, and orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-939) \$3.98.

On a disc containing some relatively unhackneyed

music, London presents Janine Micheau, young French soprano, in an operatic recital. Additional interest is supplied by the assisting soloists: two tenors (Libero de Luca and Pierre Gianotti) and a baritone (the always excellent Jean Borthayre).

There are two operas involved, one the fairly familiar *Pêcheurs de Perles* and the other Gounod's almost forgotten *Mireille*. The former opens with the famous duet *Au fond du Temple Saint*, by de Luca and Borthayre; there follows Léila's aria *Comme autrefois* by Mlle. Micheau. The first side of the disc ends with the second act duet *Léila, Dieu puissant le voilà* wherein Mlle. Micheau is joined by M. de Luca. These three excerpts are very well sung and offer a fine introduction to Bizet's melodious, quasi-oriental opera. The writer would have preferred some less familiar excerpts, notably the last act music which rises to real heights and power, but the present disc is, none the less, charming.

Gounod's *Mireille* comes after *Faust* (1859), having been first produced in 1864. It is a pastoral opera, based on a poem by the Provençal poet, Frédéric Mistral. The excerpts include the inevitable waltz song *O légère hirondelle*, a lovely duet *La brise est douce* (with Pierre Gianotti) a scena *Trahir Vincent—mon coeur ne peut changer*, the cavatina *Heureux petit berger* and a quite dramatic (for Gounod) aria *Voici la vaste plaine* that depicts Mireille's pilgrimage across the plain of the Crau to reach the church of Saintes Maries. The idea and music seem to anticipate a similar scene in Massenet's *Thais*.

Mlle. Micheau sings all the music with a sure sense of style and genuine understanding. The assisting tenor, M. Gianotti, is adequate. If the recorded sound were up to London's usual standards, the disc could be unreservedly recommended but, unfortunately, the sound level is too high and there is the inevitable "breaking up" on high notes.

The jacket notes are good although, as usual, no texts are supplied. W.

Beethoven: Fidelio (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, chorus and NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6025) \$7.98.

Florestan.....Jan Peerce (t)
Leonora.....Rose Bampton (s)
Don Fernando.....Nicola Moscona (bs)
Don Pizarro.....Herbert Janssen (bs)
Rocco.....Sidor Belarsky (bs)
Marcellina.....Eleanor Steber (s)
Jacquino.....Joseph Laderoute (t)

A long awaited and much requested release is made by RCA Victor this month. It is, of course, the recorded version of the Toscanini broadcasts (December 10th and 17th, 1944) of Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*.

Now for many persons it remains only to say "here it is"—the recorded sound is quite good, considering that it must have been transferred from ace-

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
© indicates 45 rpm.

tate discs, and the performance is stamped with Toscanini's forceful personality.

There may be some (like the writer, for example) who are not impressed with Toscanini's very individual conception of what constitutes the composer's intentions—for these persons it can be safely stated that this performance of *Fidelio* leaves quite a bit to be desired. There are tempi that don't make musical sense; such as the *accelerando* at the close of Florestan's aria. There is also what may be described as a definite lack of spontaneity about the production—everything is mechanically perfect, but the opera does not come alive.

The cast is nominally a good one. Jan Peerce is reasonably effective as Florestan, Rose Bampton a quite good Leonora. Eleanor Steber is excellent in the minor (remember, the recording is ten years old) role of Marcellina. Herbert Janssen, as the unspeakable Pizarro, is the only member of the cast with any real background in German opera and, aside from a reluctance to be very disagreeable, does a fine job.

This *Fidelio*, however, remains Toscanini's as does virtually everything he plays; just as Caruso was unable to escape the consequences of his phenomenally beautiful voice, so Toscanini cannot help being Toscanini which, if one likes him, fine; otherwise one waits a bit longer and, sure enough, another recording of *Fidelio* will come along.

Victor has supplied a libretto that includes the spoken dialogue, although it is not included in the performance. This is very helpful to an understanding of the plot. There is also a worshipful essay, by Marcia Davenport, entitled "Beethoven, *Fidelio* and Toscanini." W.

Menotti: *Amelia al Ballo* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Nino Sanzogno. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35140TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35140) \$5.95.

Amelia.....Margherita Carosio (s)
Husband.....Roland Panerai (bt)
Lover.....Giacinto Prandelli (t)
Friend.....Maria Amadini (c)
Police Chief.....Enrico Campi (bs)
Chambermaids..... } Silvana Zanolli (ms)
 } Elena Mazzoni (ms)

It seems strange that an opera as familiar as *Amelia Goes to the Ball* should have to come to us in its first recorded version as *Amelia al Ballo*. It is not chauvinism that caused the feeling; it is only that one has always looked on *Amelia* as "American," since it had its premiere at the Curtis Institute (Phila.) in 1937 and its Metropolitan production in 1938. The first La Scala performance (which was not, incidentally, the Italian premiere) took place on 24 March 1954. The present disc was made just before the La Scala production and is slightly abridged. The cuts were sanctioned by Mr. Menotti who also adds, in his delightful foreword, that he is happy to have the work recorded in its original Italian

version. After looking at the English singing version of the sparkling text one can readily understand why.

The cast is a superb one. Miss Carosio is the temperamental *Amelia* to perfection—vocally, of course, she is excellent. Rolando Panerai, one of the best baritones singing today, makes a fine husband and emerges as a first class singing actor. Giacinto Prandelli, as the lover, has a little tougher road to hoe but manages to be convincing. The others in the cast do very well and Maestro Sanzogno directs a performance that has sparkle and movement.

Musically speaking the score is delightful, if making considerable ado about not very much. It is a tuneful work, cleverly orchestrated and certainly deserving of a place in the operatic repertoire.

The present recording is a good one, well balanced and well engineered. The factory sealed package is complete with libretto, pictures and other information that make it additionally enjoyable. The set is a welcome addition to the growing list of operatic recordings. W.

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-127) \$7.96.

Lucia.....Lily Pons (s)
Edgardo.....Richard Tucker (t)
Enrico.....Frank Guarrera (bt)
Alisa.....Thelma Votipka (ms)
Arturo.....Thomas Hayward (t)
Normanno.....James McCracken (t)
Raimondo.....Norman Scott (bs)

The task of reporting on this new Columbia issue of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* is one the writer does not especially relish. It would be nice to be able to report a Metropolitan production on records that was excellent in all respects; but, so far, the opportunity has not presented itself.

Miss Pons professes a decided liking for the role of the unhappy Lucia. The writer, having (despite appearances to the contrary) his share of the milk of human kindness, would like to agree and say her fondness for the role was evidenced by a glowing interpretation of the part; but, to put it bluntly, it struck him as ordinary. Further, the close up microphoning is not flattering either to her vocal quality or her technique. Richard Tucker, the possessor of as fine a tenor voice as will be found in this country today, starts off well but comes to pieces, dramatically, by the end of the performance. His mock heroics in the finale were painful to one listener. Frank Guarrera does a capable, if not exactly inspired, job as Lucia's villainous brother, Enrico. The smaller roles are not too well cast; Norman Scott as Raimondo being particularly ineffective.

Beating time for the orchestra, chorus and soloists is Fausto Cleva—his contribution to the performance cannot honestly be described in any other way. Re-

corded sound is good and a complete (?) libretto is furnished.

Lucia di Lammermoor is available in the sterling Angel recording (TNR Mar. '54); unless one is very pro Pons and/or Tucker, the present set does not hold much musical or vocal interest. W.

Strauss: Wiener Blut (complete). (Sung in German).

Soloists, the Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Otto Ackermann. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35156/7TP) \$7.90. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3519-3S) \$9.90.

Fürst Ypsheim-Gindelbach.....Karl Dönch (t)
Graf Zedlau.....Nicolai Gedda (t)
Gabriele, Gräfin Zedlau..Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s)
Franziska.....Erika Köth (s)
Kagler.....Alois Pernerstorfer (bs)
Josef.....Erich Kunz (bt)
Pepi Pleininger.....Emmy Loose (s)

Angel continues its series of Viennese operettas with a really gilt-edged version of Strauss' last work in this form, *Wiener Blut* ("Vienna Blood"). This tuneful and gracious operetta bears a very close resemblance to the immortal *Fledermaus* but, for the writer, it does not quite come up to its predecessor.

The stellar cast is headed by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf who sings the part of the Countess with spirit and style and perfect vocal quality. It would be difficult to imagine a finer performance. The Count is sung by Nicolai Gedda, who is much more at home here than he was in the RCA Victor recording of *Faust*. His light tenor is a decided asset to the performance. Erich Kunz is a sterling artist who, in addition to being a fine baritone, is also an excellent comedian. A newcomer to records, at least to this writer, is Karl Dönch, who sings the role of the Prime Minister of Reuss-Geiz-Schliez. He displays an adequate tenor voice and a fine sense of comedy. Emmy Loose is vocally satisfactory but inclined to be a bit hammy—her squeaking at the close of the second record side made this listener uncomfortable. Alois Pernerstorfer (an old hand at this sort of thing) and Erika Köth (a lovely light soprano) round out what might be considered an ideal cast.

Otto Ackermann and the Philharmonia Orchestra supply the necessary support in an impeccable manner—the requisite light touch is always in evidence. The factory-sealed package is one of Angel's better efforts including, as it does, an essay on the opera by Josef Wechsberg, and libretto and pictures. W.

CHORAL



The Obernkirchen Children's Choir (Vol. II). The Obernkirchen Children's Choir directed by Edith Möller. 1-10" disc (*ANG-64012) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Wenn über Sonnenwegen* (Möller); *In stiller Nacht* (Brahms); *Jetzt gang i ans Brünle* (Folksong); *Heimlich Liebe* (Folksong); *Ein Hennlein weiss* (Scandello); *To Shepherds on a*

Distant Hill (Welsh Folksong); *Erst kommt das Linke bein* (Möller); *Schlafe, mein Prinzchen* (Mozart).

Nothing succeeds like success, and Angel has hurried along and issued Volume II of the Obernkirchen Children's Choir before the furor over Volume I (TNR Oct. '54) dies down. The jacket features the number *Ein Hennlein weiss* ("A Little White Hen"), but if any of the present songs will take the place of *Der frohliche Wanderer* of Volume I, it will be *Wenn über Sonnenwegen* ("When Over Sunlit Paths").

Verdi: Requiem. (Sung in Latin). Elizabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano), Oralia Dominguez (mezzo-soprano), Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor), Cesare Siepi (bass); Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Victor de Sabata. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35158/9TP) \$9.90. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3520B) \$11.90.

Verdi: Requiem. Maria Stader (soprano); Helmut Krebs (tenor); Marianna Radev (mezzo-soprano); Kim Borg (bass); Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral; and RIAS Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (Berlin) conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-118) \$11.70.

After waiting, more or less patiently, for the last few years for a recording that would do justice to Verdi's wonderful *Manzoni Requiem*, this column is glad to report that there is one—the new Angel release made at La Scala under the inspired direction of Maestro Victor de Sabata.

The soloists are just about the finest that could be found anywhere. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf does magnificently throughout and is particularly effective in the closing passages, the lyrical and dramatic *Libera me*. Oralia Dominguez is a first rate mezzo, new to the writer, who sings like a veteran. Of Giuseppe di Stefano it is difficult for one to write dispassionately: his performance is one of those very beautiful ones that occasionally finds its way onto records. He sings with a degree of expression that is at once amazing and beautiful. The wonderful prayer, *Ingemisco, tanquam reus* is delivered slowly and with such obvious sincerity as almost to melt the heart. Siepi is also a tower of strength. His delivery of the notoriously difficult *Mors stupebit* is dramatically convincing and musically correct.

Naturally, most of the credit for the magnificent performance accrues to Victor de Sabata for his dramatic reading of the score. He adopts, at the outset, the most deliberate of tempi and, by so doing, preserves the dignity of the music while giving his singers a chance to sing—two items that Toscanini overlooked in his performance.

There are extensive notes by Francis Toye who, almost alone among writers, acknowledges Verdi's debt to Berlioz, particularly insofar as this work is concerned. The factory sealed package is exquisite, the sound the best Angel has yet given us—in fact,

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
() indicates 45 rpm.

everything is as fine as could be wished for.

After this performance and recording, the Decca issue seemed a dull affair indeed. The soloists are not particularly good and neither is the recording. Herr Fricsay directs in a musicianly fashion that, while not nearly as dramatic as Sabata's, still preserves the musical essentials of the score. Nevertheless, this Decca recording is on the poor side, both vocally and technically. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 78 ("Jesu, der meine Seele"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 106** ("Actus Tragicus"). (Sung in German). Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano); Dagmar Hermann (alto); Anton Dermota (tenor); Hans Braun (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of the Bach Guild conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-537) \$4.98.

Bach: Motet "Jesu meine Freude." One side, and **Bach: Motet "Komm Jesu komm."** And **Bach: Motet "Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied."** Vienna Akademie Kammerchor directed by Ferdinand Grossmann. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5289) \$5.95.

Two cantatas, both of which have been recorded twice before, are issued this month by Bach Guild. Both, needless to say, represent the last word, both technically and artistically. *Cantata No. 106* ("Gottes zeit") has the closest competition from a recording on Westminster (TNR June '52) with the scholarly Hermann Scherchen at the helm. Bach Guild, however, trumps Westminster's ace by using a baroque organ and ensemble, including recorders, that makes for a tremendously interesting effect. The soloists are about on a par but the superior recording of the Bach Guild disc makes it preferable. The *Cantata No. 78* is the first recording to be contained on a single side of a twelve-inch record; the two previous recordings were on two sides of a ten inch disc. Taken all in all, the disc is a fine one and can be unreservedly recommended.

The three motets on the Westminster have been recorded before. The performances here are as flawless as the recording. They are, of course, sung unaccompanied, which lends an ethereal sound that is very persuasive.

Both discs have notes and texts, a circumstance that adds greatly to the understanding and enjoyment of the music. W.

The Masonic Music of Mozart. Rudolf Christ, Erich Majkut (tenors); Walter Berry (bass); Vienna Symphony Orchestra and Vienna Chamber Choir conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3062) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Cantata: *Dir, Seele des Waltalls*, K. 429; Cantata: *Die Maurensfreude*, K. 471; *Maurerische Trauermusik*, K. 477; *Eine kleine freimaurer Kantate*, K. 623.

Mozart's association with Free Masonry is quite a

well known one, and he wrote a considerable amount of music for its services and rituals. Some years ago Vox issued a set, now withdrawn, that included all the present selections plus some eight other items. The notice at that time (TNR Feb. '51) observed that the recording of the set was only fair because the records were dubbed from 78's.

The present Epic disc is, of course, a new recording; but injudicious cutting of the master has resulted in too loud a sound, and there is some blasting and break up. The high volume level also produces a coarseness of tone that is not pleasing.

This is all the more a pity, for both the music and the performance are well above average. When Mozart felt something strongly, the music he wrote became transcendently beautiful, and this is the case with the four works recorded here. Of the three cantatas, the third (K. 623) has the melancholy distinction of being the last complete work he wrote, the *Requiem* being, of course, unfinished. There is no hint of sadness in this music, however. It is a festive work in C major and has a text by Mozart's fellow Mason, Emanuel Schikaneder, of *Zauberflöte* fame. The two earlier cantatas, the first of which was left unfinished, are lighter works but very lovely. The second of these two (K. 471), a tenor solo with chorus, is a hymn of praise; it is fine music.

The gem of the record is the wonderful and moving *Maurerische Trauermusik* (Masonic Funeral Music), played here with great feeling and expression by Paumgartner and his orchestra. It is also the most satisfactory insofar as recorded sound is concerned.

Excellent notes and the texts of the cantatas are supplied on the jacket. W.



VOCAL

Schubert: Die schöne Mullerin, Op. 25. (Sung in German). Anton Dermota (tenor) accompanied by Hilde Dermota (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-971) \$3.98.

Duplication of recorded music poses a pretty problem for the record reviewer. He hears something (usually a *New World Symphony*, an *Eroica* or the *Franck Variations*) one month and then, the next month, out comes another version of the same music. Now it may be that the earlier one was a "clinker" and the newer version is better; this is fine, but then comes another and another. This disc happens to be the fourth recording this writer has heard on LP (the lone one he hasn't heard is the one by Aksel Schiotz, a *Victor Treasury* issue) and it can be stated simply that the best performance is still the one by Walther Ludwig on Decca (TNR Mar. '53). The others are inadequate in one way or another, and the present recording by Dermota is average—neither very good nor very bad. Certainly Anton Dermota is a good tenor, but it takes a whale of a lot more than good tenoring to sing *Die schöne Mullerin*. The

songs are largely strophic, and it requires consummate artistry (something very few present day singers possess) to make the cycle, exquisite as it is, continually interesting.

Thus, for those who do not have a copy of *Die schöne Mullerin* in their collections, it is suggested they try the Ludwig performance. If this does not please, there are the Singher (TNR Dec. '51), Dermota and Munteanu (TNR Nov. '54) in that order. The Schiotz version has many adherents, but the writer is not qualified to judge, not having heard it.

London has supplied good sound, fair notes and no texts. London has also crossed this column up, for the review of the Munteanu disc concluded with the remark that Souzay could probably do a superb job with the cycle and suggested that London record it; here is its answer. W.

Irmgard Seefried Sings Wolf and Brahms. Irmgard Seefried (soprano) accompanied by Erik Werba (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9743) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Auch kleine Dinge können uns entzücken; Mir ward gesagt, du reitest in die Ferne; Wer reif dich denn?; Du denkst mit einem Fädchen mich zu fangen; Wie lange schön war immer mein Verlangen; Nein, junger Herr; Mein Liebster ist so klein; Ihr jungen Leute; Wir haben beide lange Zeit geschwiegen; Mein Liebster singt; Man sagt mir, deine Mutter wollt' es nicht; Mein Liebster hat zu Tische mich geladen; Du sagst mir, dass ich kleine Fürstin sei; Wohl kenn' ich Euren Stand; Was soll der Zorn, mein Schatz; Wenn du, mein Liebster, steigst zum Himmel auf; Gesegnet sei das Grün; O wär' dein Haus durchsichtig wie ein Glas; Heut' Nacht erhob ich mich; Schweig' einmal still; Verschling' der Abgrund meines Liebsten Hütte; Ich hab' in Penna einen Liebsten wohnen (all from "Italienisches Liederbuch") (Wolf). Die Trauernde; Die Schwalbe zieht fort; Feinsliebchen; Schwesterlein; In stiller Nacht; Vergebliches Ständchen (Brahms).

This is the tenth disc devoted in toto or in part to the *lieder* of Hugo Wolf. The twenty-two songs on this disc are from the *Italienisches Liederbuch*; there are six Brahms songs to fill out the second side.

A taste for Wolf's music is sometimes difficult to come by—very rewarding once acquired. The present disc offers an excellent introduction to his more sophisticated style. Unfortunately the introductory value is lessened by a complete lack of texts or more than the most cursory of notes on the songs—they only discuss Wolf and the *Italienisches Liederbuch*, not any of the particular songs recorded. For those interested in this particular record it can be noted that the songs are numbers 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 25, 28, 29, 32, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45 and 46.

The Brahms *lieder* are very different, being almost exclusively "folk song" settings. They are very nice, but a little out of place on this disc.

Miss Seefried is an accomplished vocalist and a first-rate *lieder* singer. She seems singularly happy

with her material on this record, and the results of this fortunate circumstance are communicated to the listener.

Erik Werba proves an ideal accompanist; the recorded sound is good and the disc can be recommended very highly with the proviso that, for the tyro, Wolf can be difficult. W.

Dvorák: (7) Gypsy Songs, Op. 55. One side, and Brahms: (10) Songs in Folk Style. Anny Felbermayer (soprano) accompanied by Victor Graef (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-446) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: Mein Lied ertönt; Ei, wie mein Triangel; Rings ist der Wald; Als die alte Mutter; Rein gestimmt die Saiten In dem weiten, breiten, luftigen Leinenkleide; Darf des Falken Schwinge Tatrahöhn (Dvorák). Wiegenlied, Op. 49, No. 4; Die Sonne scheint nicht mehr; Da unten im Tale; Feinsliebchen, du solst mir nicht barfuss geh'n; Schwesterlein; Vergebliches Ständchen, Op. 84, No. 4; Sandmännchen; Mädchenlied, Op. 85, No. 3; Dort in den Weiden, Op. 97, No. 4; In stiller Nacht (Brahms).

Dvorák: (10) Biblical Songs, Op. 99. One side, and Dvorák: (7) Gypsy Songs, Op. 55. And Dvorák: (8) Love Songs, Op. 83. Hildegard Roessel-Majdan (contralto) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5324) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Um Ihn her is Wolken und Dunkel; Du bist, O Herr, mein Schirm und Schild; Gott, erhöre mein Gebet; Gott ist mein Hirte; Herr! nun sing ich Dir ein neues Lied; Höre Gott, mein Flehen; An den Wassern zu Babylon; Wende Dich zu mir!; Ich hebe meine Augen auf zu den Bergen; Singet ein neues Lied ("Biblische Lieder"). Mein Lied ertönt; Ei, wie mein Triangel; Rings ist der Wald; Als die alte Mutter; Rein gestimmt die Saiten; In dem weiten, breiten, luft'gen Leinenkleide; Darf des Falken Schwinge Tatrahöhn ("Zigeunermelodien"). Wird doch die Liebe; Tot ist's in mancher Menschenbrust; Ich schleich um jenes Haus herum; Ich weiss, dass meiner lieb'; Rings die Natur nun in Schlummer und Traumen; Im tiefen Walde; Im süßen Bann; Du einzig Teure ("Liebeslieder").

There is a definite musical kinship between Dvorák and Brahms—Brahms was one of the first to recognize the young Dvorák, and certain similarities can be detected in their music.

The Vanguard disc features Anny Felbermayer, who sings both Brahms and Dvorák: songs that might be described as belonging to their "folk song phase." The Gypsy Songs of Dvorák and the Songs in Folk Style by Brahms consist of groups of seven and ten songs, respectively. Of the Gypsy Songs only the fourth, *Songs My Mother Taught Me*, has achieved any degree of popularity, although all are excellent songs. The Brahms songs have been more popular, but it is possible that the majority will be new to most listeners. Miss Felbermayer sings with all her wonted vocal lustre and charm. To sing seventeen

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 () indicates 45 rpm.

songs and avoid monotony is quite a challenge, one that is not always met successfully here. Fair recording, the complete texts and no notes complete the offering.

Miss Roessel-Majdan's recording for Westminster is concerned only with Dvorák. In addition to the Gypsy Songs there are two other groups: the *Liebeslieder* and the complete set of Biblical Songs. The latter are settings of portions of ten Psalms. They may be compared, in spirit in all events, with Brahms' *Four Serious Songs*, although Dvorák's touch is lighter and his outlook less gloomy. The *Liebeslieder* set is a collection of songs composed over a period of twenty years and thus cannot be considered as a unit. Like all Dvorák's music, however, they are melodious and craftsmanlike—what unity there is comes from their common authorship and spirit.

Miss Roessel-Majdan is not unknown to record collectors. She has a light contralto that is used with intelligence and good taste. Her understanding of the music is never in question, and her projection of these songs is at once sympathetic and musical.

Westminster has supplied, in addition to the complete texts, detailed and informative notes by Peter Hugh Reed. W.

A Broadcast Recital. Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) accompanied by Frederick Stone (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-1032) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *The Fairy Lough*, Op. 77, No. 2 (Stanford); *A Soft Day*, Op. 141, No. 3 (Stanford); *Love is a bable*, Op. 152, No. 3 (Parry); *Silent Noon* (Vaughan Williams); *Go not, happy day* (Bridge); *Sleep* (Warlock); *Pretty Ring-time* (Warlock); *O waly, waly* (trad.—arr. Britten); *Come you not from Newcastle?* (trad.—arr. Britten); *Kitty my love* (trad.—arr. Hughes).

The great voice of Kathleen Ferrier lives on, via records, after her untimely demise, and it is with great surprise and joy that we announce the present disc, a recording of a broadcast recital made by Miss Ferrier on 5 June 1952. The reproduction is very hi-fi, and her shimmering tones come through with great strength and beauty.

As a singer of songs Miss Ferrier had no peer, and this disc has caught her at the height of her powers. Her choice of material is properly varied, and she makes each song a shining jewel, some sparkling like diamonds, some cloudy like garnets, each cut that its facets reflect its mood. A most charming disc.

The following paragraph is quoted, in its entirety, from the jacket notes:

"All profits from the sale of this record are being donated to the Kathleen Ferrier Cancer Research Fund by London *frrr* who wish gratefully to acknowledge the cooperation of the B. B. C. who have made the recording available.

"They would also like to thank the following persons who have generously agreed to waive any claims to fees or royalties normally due to them, in

favour of the Research Fund: The composers or their heirs; the arrangers and publishers of the songs; the accompanist; Miss Ferrier's executors."

Selections from Berlin's "White Christmas." Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye and Peggy Lee. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8083) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep*; *The Old Man*; *Sisters*; *The Best Things Happen While You're Dancing*; *Snow*; *Mandy*; *Choreography*; *Gee, I Wish I Was Back in the Army*; *Love, You Didn't Do Right By Me*; *What Can You Do With a General*; *White Christmas* (finale).

We understand that the new movie "White Christmas" has been doing very good business wherever it has appeared, which would indicate that this disc should find favor with the movie-going public. It has catchy Berlin tunes; Crosby and Kaye should sell it, even without Rosemary Clooney, who was in the movie but is not on this disc.

Greek Folk Songs and Dances. The Royal Greek Festival Company directed by Dora Stratou. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-527) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Songs and dances from Cyprus, Moirologhia, Ionian Islands, Macedonia, Crete, and Roumeli and the Peloponnese.

We learn from the jacket notes that the Royal Greek Festival Company made its American debut in 1954 and were "an astounding success." Hearing this LP record, it is not difficult to understand why, for their spirit transcends the limits of the disc and fairly lets you see them perform. We confess to not understanding much of this music; and for some it might get monotonous. But that is the way Greek music is; repeated hearings brought out more of the meat and increased our enjoyment. The extremely revealing reproduction gives this disc a "presence" without which, we feel, it would lack much of the appeal that it has.

Moussorgsky: Songs and Dances of Death. One side, and Duparc: (5) **Songs.** George London (baritone) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*CML-4906) \$3.98.

CONTENTS OF SONGS: *L'Invitation au Voyage*; *Phidyle*; *Chanson Triste*; *Extase*; *Le Manoir de Rosemonde*.

Moussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death* is here recorded for the fourth time and, for the fourth time, leaves something to be desired. This music is not for every singer, and it will remain for a bass (Christoff is the first and almost only name that comes to mind) with a big voice and a natural facility for the Russian language who will be recorded well—then the really great music of the cycle will have the opportunity to make the impact that is inherent in it. George London seems to have neither the voice nor the temperament for the music, and the result is flat. He does not seem to be in good voice either,

for one gets the impression of straining for effect.

The five Duparc songs are a bit more successful, vocally, but artistically they do not "come off"—they, too, are monotonously sung in an unmusical voice.

This is a disappointing record, for previous recordings by George London have been considerably better. Paul Ulanowsky is an able accompanist. The English texts of the Russian songs and the French-English of the Duparc songs are supplied. W.

Berlin: There's No Business Like Show Business.

Ethel Merman, Donald O'Connor, Dan Dailey, Johnnie Ray and Mitzi Gaynor in selections from the film sound track. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8091) \$3.98.

Weill: Lady in the Dark. Ann Sothern and cast from the NBC "Spectacular" TV Production. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1882) \$3.98.

Bizet-Hammerstein: Carmen Jones. Harry Belafonte, Dorothy Dandridge and Pearl Bailey in selections from the film sound track. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1881) \$3.98.

Rodgers: On Your Toes. Vera Zorina and Bobby Van with supporting cast from the current N. Y. Production. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9015) \$4.98.

About this time of year a lot of shows and movies are issued in record form. We have listed four of the better ones, each of which is well worth the investigation of those interested. A novel switch is RCA Victor's issue of the NBC "spectacular," *Lady in the Dark*, probably the best of the current TV shows of that category.

DICTION



The Investigator. 1-12" disc (*DISCURIOSITIES LP-6834) \$5.95.

Here is a disc which will prove to be most controversial. Both label and jacket are completely barren of notes, descriptive material of any kind—even the name of the manufacturer. It is rumored that the dramatization contained on it was pirated from a Canadian radio broadcast. Names of the actors are not given, of course, nor is the name of the hero (?) of the play; but the reproduction and recording (except for a couple of barely noticeable tape splices) are quite above reproach. We understand that this disc was circulated privately in broadcasting and political circles. It is now available to the public; how long it will remain available, no one can say.

Although his name, as we said, is not mentioned, there is no doubt that the hero (The Investigator) of the story is a certain senator from the Middle West who has done not a little investigating of subversives in this country and about whom almost no one, it would seem, is neutral these days. The imita-

tion of his voice is unmistakably realistic. In the play The Investigator is killed in a plane crash and goes "Up There," where he finds he must be investigated by the Permanent Committee on Permanent Entry, consisting of Titus Oates, the English conspirator; Torquemada, the Spanish inquisitor; Cotton Mather, formerly of Salem, Mass.; and Baron George Jeffreys, the Hanging Judge, formerly of the Bloody Assizes. The new applicant is welcomed with open arms by this group; he is made the new chairman of this committee, and he immediately sets about re-opening cases of previous entrants on the basis of suspicion of subversion and loyalty to the forces of "Down There."

As a result of their investigation Socrates, Jefferson, Milton, Voltaire, and hundreds of others are deported (Chopin, for example, because he wrote a "Revolutionary Etude"). Finally the Investigator tries to subpoena "The Chief," which is too much even for the committee; the Investigator, now babbling that he is "The Chief," is deported.

The subtlety, the detail, the striking satire of *The Investigator* are superb; the unnamed playwright has supplied a script with just the right touch to make you hate it or love it, depending upon whether you are pro or anti. Most controversial! J.

ORGAN



Organ Music of the 17th Century. Gustav Leonhardt, playing the organ of the "Stiftskirche" at Klosterneuburg (Austria). 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-529) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: Hymnus "A solis ortus cardine," Hymnus "Alvus tumescit virginis" (Praetorius); *Ricercar IX toni* (Erbach); *Toccata prima* (from "Toccate d'intravolutura") (Frescobaldi); *Sonata chromatica* (Merula); *Toccata* (Froberger); *Passacaglia*, *Toccata cromatica con Durezza e Ligature* (Kerll); *Toccata* (Scherer).

The nine selections presented on this disc offer a good program of 17th century organ music, a period coming to be much admired these days by music lovers of many varied tastes. This disc is a good one to use as a get-acquainted one for those yet to explore this field, for the organ used is more musical and less of a squeaky box of whistles than most instruments of this vintage. This writer, while a great fan of organ music, is no dyed-in-the-wool baroque; if the organs don't have some pleasing musical quality, they hold no interest for him. The organ which Mr. Leonhardt plays is that of the "Stiftskirche" at Klosterneuburg in Austria, considered one of the finest Baroque organs in Europe. It was built in 1636-42 by Georg Freundt of Pasing, who made use of part of the pipework (and probably also the case) of the former 16th century organ. It has 2179 pipes. Some alterations were made in the reeds during the 19th century, but these

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ◊ indicates 45 rpm.

were corrected, after the 17th century design, in recent years. The pitch of the organ is one half tone above our normal pitch. The ensemble sings nicely, and there is a generous use of large ensemble effects throughout the disc. The softer effects and solo voices are pleasing and not hard or perky. The microphoning is close and very revealing which, of course, results in clarity. It is a fine reproduction, with little or no buzzing and sizzling common to many organ recordings.

Gustav M. Leonhardt, born in 1928 in Holland, is an acknowledged European master of the authentic ornaments and improvisatory style of Baroque music. He is also an expert on the construction and design of the harpsichord and Baroque organ. Since 1952 he has been professor of harpsichord and musicology at the Academy of Music in Vienna, dividing his time between Vienna and the Conservatory of Amsterdam, where he also teaches. He has recorded Bach's *Art of Fugue* and *Goldberg Variations* on the harpsichord (for Bach Guild LP). For those interested in this period of organ music, here is disc to be highly recommended. S.

Foort Pops. Reginald Foort, playing the organ in the Fox Theatre (Detroit). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1057) \$4.

CONTENTS: *The Continental; Night and Day; All the Things You Are; Smoke Gets in Your Eyes; Blue Tango; Lover; My Heart Stood Still; I'll See You Again.*

You can take this title two ways: Foort (playing) pops, or Foort popping. Both are correct. The Wurlitzer organ in the Fox Theatre is a tremendous instrument, and Reginald Foort makes it do everything but stand on its ear; Emory Cook has brought us every sound except that of the engineer's hair standing on its end.

PIANO



Franck: Variations Symphoniques. And Fauré: *Ballade, Op. 19.* Jean Doyen (piano) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. One side, and *Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 5 in F, Op. 103.* Magda Tagliaferro (piano) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3057) \$3.98.

Fauré: Ballade, Op. 19. And François: *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra.* Kathleen Long (piano) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. One side, and Fauré: (4) *Nocturnes.* Kathleen Long (piano). 1-12" disc (*LL-1058) \$3.98.

CONTENTS OF NOCTURNES: No. 2 in B, Op. 33; No. 8 in D-flat, Op. 85; No. 5 in B-flat, Op. 37, No. 8; No. 7 in C-sharp minor, Op. 74.

A well-integrated disc, this Epic LP: three melodi-

ous and romantic works for piano and orchestra by French composers. The Franck work is more popular and better known than the others; and it faces stiff competition on records, and each will have his own particular favorite. We will say (a) that we are very fond of Fauré's *Ballade*, (b) that the present recording of the *Ballade* is excellent—our favorite, and (c) therefore we would urge those who do not already own the Franck *Variations* on another record to consider this disc as the one to get; but (d) if you already own a satisfactory version of the *Variations*, consider the London version of the *Ballade*, which is very fine, indeed.

We do not mean to detract from the Saint-Saëns *Fifth Concerto* by leaving discussion of it until last: we wonder why it is not played more in concerts. It is easy to listen to, full of pleasant melodies and supplies plenty of opportunity for fireworks by the artist. We think anyone who likes the Tchaikovsky, Grieg, or other similar concertos will like this one. It is a worthy addition to the recorded repertoire.

The always-reliable Kathleen Long turns in some gilt-edged performances on her London disc, including a very fine performance of Fauré's *Ballade* as stated above. If you select this disc you will find sprightly performances of four of Fauré's *Nocturnes* and a sympathetic reading of Francaix' pleasant little *Concertino*, the only other recording of which is an older Capitol recording with the composer at the piano; this Capitol disc is good, of course, but cannot compare in matters of reproduction.

Turina Recital. Alicia de Larrocha (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9750) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: (3) *Danzas Fantásticas* ("Exaltation," "Ensueno," "Orgia"); *Ciclo Pianístico No. 1*—Preludios 1-5; *Ciclo Pianístico No. 2*—Partita in C; *Recuerdos de la Antigua España*—Nos. 1-4.

Recital by Spagnolo. Paolo Spagnolo (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1040) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Andaluza* (Granados); *The Maiden and the Nightingale* (Granados); *Seguidillas* (Albeniz); *Fantasia Baetica* (Falla); *The Musical Box* (Liadov); (3) *Danzas Argentinas* (Siciliani); (3) *Canciones Argentinas* (Aguirre); *Sonatina No. 4* *Braziliiana* (Mignone); *Burlesque* (Toch).

Decca introduces us, this month, to Alicia de Larrocha playing works of her native Spain by Joaquín Turina (1882-1949). The music is well suited to her light touch. We have always preferred Turina's piano works to his larger efforts—perhaps because he was, himself, a pianist of uncommon ability. Miss Larrocha is well-known on the Continent but so far has not ventured to America; if she would play works such as these, that one doesn't hear every day, we should think she would be welcomed here with open arms.

London is continually introducing new artists via records and then not telling anyone anything about

them in the jacket notes (see *Spanish Music for Guitar*, TNR Nov. '54). Plenty of notes on the music in large, well-spaced type. In the present case Señor Spagnolo exhibits no especial ability: good technician, solid knowledge of the works played, excellent choice of program. But the works don't "live," in spite of some very fine piano reproduction.

Brahms Recital No. 1. Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-959) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: (4) *Ballades*, Op. 10; (8) *Capricci and Intermexzi*, Op. 76.

Brahms Recital No. 2. Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-960) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: (7) *Fantasias*, Op. 116; (4) *Pieces*, Op. 119.

Our admiration for Wilhelm Kempff is not denied here, and his performances seldom disappoint, and we say this in spite of the fact that London seems to have let us down in matters of reproduction. Our review copies were noisy, and the piano tone didn't "ring." It is seldom we have to mention this about *frr* discs; they are usually so fine that perhaps one expects too much. Try before you buy.

MISCELLANEOUS



Burlesque Uncensored. Strip Tease Rhythms, Baggy Pants Comedy, Candy Butcher, etc., recorded "on location." 1-12" disc (*SOT-1071) \$5.95.

Mr. Emory Cook
Sounds of Our Times Records

Dear Mr. Cook:

We have continuously looked forward to covering your new releases in these columns; and while we do not profess to understand all of them, not a few have found favor with us. However, with this latest "bare faced documentary" you have certainly pulled out the plug.

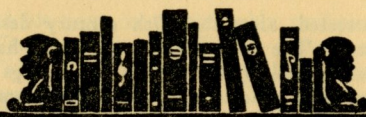
Take the strip tease rhythms, for instance. With the wide range high fidelity you have produced here, one can fairly see what is going on onstage. How can the collector play this when his wife is home?

The nadir to which your baggy pants comedians have descended, we are told, will not be new to burlesque habitués; but of course it was new to this column. We are glad you cut the candy butcher short. Also that you used "lo-fi" on this low subject.

We suspect that public taste is higher than you think and that you'll probably not sell more than a couple of hundred thousand of this disc—outside of Boston, anyway.

Yours very truly,

THE NEW RECORDS Staff



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esterie, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
O Indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

PAGE 16

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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VOL. 22, NO. 12

FEBRUARY, 1955

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

WITH THIS ISSUE the twenty-second volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed. We are glad to report that interest in recorded music is at its all time high, and this interest will, no doubt, be further intensified by the recent lowering of prices of the most popular brands of LP records. All of us are glad to see these new low prices; but we should keep in mind that in order for the manufacturers to hold these prices there must be about a twenty-five per cent increase in the dollar volume sale of LP records. While we have no reason to doubt that this increase will be forthcoming, it would be well for us old-timers to keep it in mind; if there are records you intend adding to your collection, now would be the best time we can foresee to do so. If prices remain as they are, nothing is lost; but if they change, they cannot go any direction but up.

We have added many subscribers to our list in the last twelve months, and we should like to take this opportunity to welcome these new readers. Too, we wish to express appreciation to our host of long-time readers, a great many of whom have been with us for twenty-two years. Our primary aim remains the same: to keep our readers advised of all new recordings in the classical field, giving full reviews to the most important items and a brief mention of others. Space in our little bulletin is still at a premium, but we shall continue to stretch it as much as we can.

* * *

Of especial interest to collectors is the recent announcement of lower prices of Angel records. The first company successfully to promote factory sealed LP's, Angel has been producing some of the finest records available; the "thrifty packs" (plain jackets, no notes, records not factory-sealed), even at \$1 less in price, have

proved no match for the beautiful factory sealed (FS) editions.

New Angel prices will be as follows: 12" FS, \$4.98; 12" TP, \$3.48; 10" FS, \$3.98. FS album sets and operas will be \$4.98 for the first record, \$5 for each additional record, and \$1 libretto charge; thus single record operas will be \$5.98 (against \$5.95 formerly), but in every other case the new prices will be lower. Exceptions: Limited Edition Mozart by Giesekeing (TNR Dec. '54), still \$75, and *Homage to Diaghilev* (*ANG-3518C), still \$17.85.

* * *

In December 1953 Capitol issued a high fidelity demonstration record entitled *A Study in High Fidelity*, and we praised it highly (*CL-SAL-9020, TNR Dec. '53). This month Capitol announces a companion disc, *Further Studies in High Fidelity*, which is certainly as desirable as its predecessor. The services of Charles Fowler, publisher of *High Fidelity Magazine*, have been retained; his article "The Nature of Sound" with the present disc will be most interesting to collectors, whether hi-fi enthusiasts or not. As before, the hearer is instructed as to what to listen for, so that he can tell whether his phonograph is giving him everything it should. The selections contained on the record offer a nice variety of both the popular and the classical: Chabrier: *España* (Hollywood Bowl Orch.—Dragon); Chavez: *Toccata for Percussion*—3rd movement (Concert Arts Percussionists—Slatkin); Antheil: *Capital of the World* (excerpt) (Ballet Theatre Orch.—Levine); Saint-Saëns: *Carnival of the Animals*—The Aviary (Concert Arts Orch.—Slatkin); Brahms: *Quintet in F minor, Op. 34*—3rd movement (excerpt) (Hollywood Quartet, Aller pf.); Stravinsky: *Rite of Spring*—Sacrificial Dance (Pittsburgh Orch.—

Steinberg); *It's De-lovely* (Ray Anthony); *Bo Mambo* (Yma Sumac); *Yesterdays* (Members of Pittsburgh Orch.—Jones); *La Bomba* (Billy May); *Mandolino* (Les Paul); *Toy Trumpet* (Ray Anthony); *Thou Swell* (Billy May). The new disc is *CL-SAL-9027; it is the same price as its predecessor, \$6.75. If your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin (for either disc) will be promptly filled.

* * *

If any of our readers were among those disappointed at not having been able to purchase a copy of the Volume I of the RCA Victor Limited Edition of Glenn Miller, now out of print, they will be glad to know that dealers handling imported records have been able to secure a *very limited supply* of the HMV (English) Limited Edition; the American Edition sold out almost overnight, so if you are interested you should place your order without delay. Only the LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm) could be obtained, and the price of each (5-12" discs in album) is \$29.95. Orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be filled so long as the supply lasts; the price includes postage to any point in U.S.A.

RENEWALS

A large majority of subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If your subscription still has some months to run, we will extend it for an additional twelve months upon receipt of your renewal at this time. Each year we send renewal blanks to everyone with the February issue (the last number in the volume) and in March we check the subscription list and drop those whose subscriptions have expired during the last year and who have not renewed them.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning February 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (post-paid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7134) \$3.98.

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 1 in D minor, Op. 13. Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Heinz Bongartz. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7131) \$5.95.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 4 in C, Op. 47. One side, and **Prokofiev: The Prodigal Son, Op. 46** (Ballet). L'Orchestre des Concerts Colonne conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7139) \$5.95.

This reviewer can appreciate the new idea in scaling record prices, whereby works which cost more to record, or esoteric works with less sales potential, must bear a higher list price than the general run of records. But with the three listed above, we fail to see where the difference is that pronounced, for they all represent imported tapes worth about the same; there may be a matter of royalties, but the sales potential is about the same among the three of them (considering the rather formidable competition for the Tchaikovsky *Fifth*). So, dear record collector, if you have the beer appetite for Tchaikovsky you can slake your thirst for \$3.98; but if you have the champagne appetite for Rachmaninoff or Prokofiev it will cost you \$5.95. We think, rather, that it is price discrimination, not justifiable values placed on the discs.

As for the discs themselves, anyone who tackles the Tchaikovsky *Fifth* has to meet Ormandy and the Philadelphians on the same field, and that is a rough deal for any conductor and orchestra. Ormandy wins this contest. Stokowski, Dorati, and several others have worthy recordings of the *Fifth* also. The present disc by Konwitschny is paced slowly, which is nothing against it in our books, but it just barely misses having that final measure of thrill most of the time. It is well played, excellently recorded, and the final movement has some interesting textures and balances; those who like a spacious reading may wish to investigate this one. Be sure to check for accurate tracking at the end of the second movement; ours refused to track properly in two spots.

Rachmaninoff thought his *First Symphony* so bad that he hid it so thoroughly it was never discovered until 1945, in October of which year Alexander Gauk and the USSR State Orchestra performed it. Ormandy premiered it over here in 1948. A pre-

vious recording exists by Rachmilovich and the Stockholm Orchestra (*ME-MG-10111). The present disc features more modern and brilliant reproduction. The long, luscious melodies of Rachmaninoff's later works are not much in evidence in this symphony, but it is a good, valid work, particularly for a man in his early twenties. It is surely a better work than both composer and critics thought at its inception.

An excellent set of notes for the Prokofiev *Fourth* has been written by Edward Tatnall Canby, who makes a strong case for the unjustly neglected work, composed for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and first played in 1930. It makes its first appearance on LP in a splendid performance by George Sebastian (whom it would have been a rare pleasure to hear in the Tchaikovsky *Fifth*, Sebastian having offered the most thrilling performance of that work in our memory some years ago). The symphony is a somewhat compact work, not nearly as shocking to 1950 ears as it was to 1930 ears. We found it a challenging work, one of Prokofiev's great scores, and recommend that interested persons hear it. The other disc side presents a ballet suite new to LP; it is typical Prokofiev ballet music, and falls rather easily on the ears in this well played version. Reproduction is excellent on both sides. All three discs seemed to us to have an unusual number of clicks and picking noises. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 38 in D, K. 504 ("Prague"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1034) \$3.98.

Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat, K. 297B. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik").** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35098TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35098) \$4.98.

Of all Mozart symphonies, No. 38 ("The Prague"), has always been a prime favorite of this writer. Georg Solti delivers a reading of the work which cannot but be admired for precision, style, and neatness; but for some reason it does not have the ring of an outstanding "Prague" as does the Kubelik version (*ME-MG-50015), or one or two others, including Beecham. And have you ever heard Bruno Walter give a good reading of this one? That is something, too! London's reproduction is excellent (too good, in fact for this work for it is rather close for the type of music). Its previous recording by Ansermet (also paired with the No. 25) is an interesting study in contrasts between conductors. The No. 25 fared better to our ears as Solti unfolded the work of the seventeen year old Mozart, his first symphony in a minor key, and a beauty it is. Of the eight other LP's of the work, one or two could be considered competition worth discussing,

but none of them has reproduction of the razor-sharp quality supplied by London, whose string tone is getting warmer every year (glory be!), and it's about time!

Mozart's lovely *Sinfonia Concertante*, whose third theme of the opening movement is one of those things that haunts you for several days after hearing it, never had it better on discs than in the gracious job which von Karajan directs. He has four top notch soloists from the Philharmonia Orchestra for the solo parts and the wonderful Philharmonia itself, plus reproduction that is luscious in quality. The whole of this piece is beyond cavil from any angle, and a feather in the Karajan cap, which this month is beginning to look more like an Indian headpiece, for his work is achieving a high level of excellence. He even shows us that he can do the "Eine kleine Nachtmusik" with Viennese charm instead of the Prussian boot-clicking method he so inappropriately used when he recorded it for Columbia a few years ago. This was, indeed, a good day for brother von Karajan, for this reviewer and for those who add this grand disc to their collections. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9718) \$3.98.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35099TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35099) \$4.98.

While there are many LP's of each of these works, these two rate more than a casual mention, for each is an excellent performance and a splendid reproduction. Whether or not either is clearly a first place winner among the many entries is another matter. We do not think that anyone beats Ormandy and the Philadelphians in the *Pathétique* (*C-ML-4544); that is an incomparable example of orchestral playing and remarkable reproduction. If you do not agree with that thesis, then Bernstein and the New Yorkers have an equal chance with Kubelik, Steinberg, and one or two others who have provided good readings of the work. Bernstein's interpretation of the *Pathétique* breaks no new ground, nor should it at this late date; it is a good solid account of the score with dramatic highlights and admirable shading. It has a sustained level of interest and the men of the New York Philharmonic play with polish and a good tone. Decca's reproduction, recorded in Carnegie Hall, is excellent in every respect.

Von Karajan performs the *Fourth* with a greater freedom from interpretive eccentricities than anything of his that we can recall. Here is a very straightforward account of the score—not in any sense a dull one; it is beautifully balanced. The Philharmonia Orchestra plays magnificently; the reproduction is of the best, with a fine timbre and good perspective. This is one symphony that can speak

very well for itself, with very little prodding by the conductor. We would say this one is an even match for the other good LP's of the work by Fricsay, Kubelik and a few others. (Ormandy's reading is fine, but the reproduction is not quite up to today's best.) We would call it a draw between Kubelik (*ME-MG-50003) and von Karajan for the best Fourth. S.

Bizet: Carmen—Suite. One side, and **Gounod: Faust**—Ballet Music. St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8288) \$4.98.

Bizet: Carmen—Suite. One side, and **Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1**. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-455) \$4.98.

Here we have an interesting comparison in versions of the well-worn *Carmen Suite*, performed on the one hand by a conductor known more for his concert performances (Golschmann) and on the other by an operatic conductor (Rossi). Apparently concert audiences prefer somewhat greater speed than do opera audiences; not that Golschmann races, but his tempi are somewhat faster than the Italian's. We have no preference; there are two sides to this question, each equally valid in our opinion. The two suites are identical (although not in sequence), except that Golschmann includes the *Habañera* where Rossi gives us the *Toreador Song*; the *Prelude to Act I*, *Aragonesa*, *Prelude to Act III*, *Dragoons of Alcala*, *Smugglers March*, *Changing of the Guard* and *Gypsy Dance* are on each disc.

Too, Golschmann gives us the Ballet Music from *Faust* where Rossi's disc has Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1*. Both works are beautifully melodious; if one is not in your collection, choose it; if both are already in your library, skip on to the next review. . . .

Homage to Diaghilev. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35151/3TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3518C) \$17.85.

CONTENTS: *Parade* (Satie); *Le Spectre de la Rose* (Weber); *Prelude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune* (Debussy); *Daphnis et Chloé* (Ravel); *Swan Lake*, Op. 20 (Tchaikovsky); *Les Sylphides*—Mazurka (Chopin); *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur* (Scarlatti); *Three-Cornered Hat*—Miller's Dance (Falla); *Le Pas d'Acier*, Op. 41 (Prokofiev); *Kikimora* (Liadov); *Petrouchka*—(3) Dances (Stravinsky).

A glance at the above listed contents of this set shows some familiar material and some fresh material. Obviously, anyone interested in this set has, by now, acquired several of the more familiar and readily available works, which will militate against the purchase of the present album, regardless of its many merits. Its chief merit, in one sense, is not a musical one; it is, rather, a visual one, for the accompanying 36 page booklet (12" x 12") is a

masterpiece in itself. This is probably the greatest accompanying leaflet ever found in a record album, a publication which devotees of the ballet should not pass up at any cost. Its contents cannot begin to be listed here; they would take up twice the space of this whole review.

Musically, the album can be rated highly, if not without qualifications. The more unfamiliar works turn out to be well worth hearing. Prokofiev's *Le Pas d'Acier* is a gripping and thrilling piece of music with a terrific impact; Liadov's lovely *Kikimora* excerpt, and the flashingly witty and satirical *Parade* by Satie are memorable musical contributions to this collection. Each of these is performed magnificently by Igor Markevitch, who also gives a brilliant exhibition of *Petrouchka* conducting in the three excerpts presented. The other works under Markevitch's hands do not efface memories of other performances. Yet all of his work is certainly marked by sane and sincere interpreting, and the playing of the Philharmonia Orchestra is of the highest order. The reproduction throughout the album is splendid, especially notable for clarity of texture.

Without wishing to detract from the *Homage to Diaghilev* (subtitled *The Music of His Famous Ballets*), we cannot help feeling that the umpteenth version of *Swan Lake*, one excerpt each from *Les Sylphides* and *Three-Cornered Hat*, and *Le Spectre* and *l'Après-Midi* are almost intruders in this otherwise excellent and interesting set. But taking the collection as it is, one cannot but admit that here is a superb collection of ballet music, beautifully played and excellently recorded, with a booklet that is a treasure in itself. S.

Riegger: Symphony No. 3, Op. 42. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. One side, and **Mennin: Symphony No. 3**. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4902) \$4.98.

Both of these esteemed American composers are having a symphony committed to LP discs for the first time, although other works have been previously released. Seventy year old Riegger and thirty-two year old Mennin may be decades apart in age, but each composed his *Third Symphony* about the same time, Riegger in 1947 and Mennin in 1946. Each of these works is worth hearing, a respectable example of contemporary writing, and good American music.

The work most likely to please most persons is Mennin's, for it has an immediate melodic appeal and a spontaneity that are felt at once, carrying the listener along new but pleasant paths. The orchestration is not particularly daring and continually yields pleasing sounds and colors, and has a rather conventional richness. The three movements of the symphony are labelled *Allegro Robusto*, *Andante Moderato*, and *Allegro Assai* (why do good Americans still use foreign terms in their scores?—our

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ◊ Indicates 45 rpm.

language is beautifully explicit, too). The symphony is an interesting one to analyze and it is well built with neat workmanship; but of even greater importance, its melodic ideas have style and charm, and it just plain sounds good. Isn't that remarkable for a "modern" work?—and an American work, at that; but believe us, it's true. The symphony gets a reading, an orchestral performance, and a reproduction that should warm the heart of any composer, for Mitropoulos has few peers among interpreters of contemporary music. He drives home a performance of vitality and authority, and the Philharmonickers play with polish and enthusiasm. This is a fine American symphony, and we need plenty more like it—on paper and on records.

Wallingford Riegger's *Symphony No. 3* may be a bit harder nut to crack for some folks, but it has an interesting plan and some fascinating architectural ideas. Riegger follows Riegger in thinking, and is inclined to produce original works, of which this is one, built on the twelve-tone system. This device is thoroughly understood by the conductor, Howard Hanson, who is also a good composer and champion of other American composers. He manages to solve the problems of the score with a performance that is convincing; repeated hearings will prove this work to have a substance of more than passing worth. Adventurous record collectors are advised to give this fine disc a hearing. S.

Mahler: *Symphony No. 1 in D* ("Titan"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1107) \$3.98.

Mahler's *First Symphony* has been a concert hall favorite from away back; and although it has not been too well served on LP records, the present recording makes ample amends for any mistreatment, either musical or technical, that it may have received.

The *Symphony No. 1 in D*, subtitled the "Titan" by Mahler himself after a novel of the same name by the redoubtable Jean Paul Richter, is a relatively youthful work, having had its first performance in 1889. The title and its program were later withdrawn by Mahler, but while the program has been forgotten the title remains—and this is, in itself, significant, for it certainly characterizes the score to perfection.

The performance recorded here is the first one on LP to do the score justice. Rafael Kubelik is a first class conductor (despite his lack of success in Chicago), and his obvious sympathy for the score is eloquently projected by the magnificent Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Kubelik underplays some of the more glaringly neurotic passages and thus adds strength both to the symphony and to his reputation, for the temptation to "let fly" in the purple passages must be a strong one. Comments on the high quality of the Vienna Philharmonic are usually redundant, but one can not help mentioning

the sterling quality of the horns and, of course, the remarkable string section. London has captured all this in one of its finest recording jobs to date.

Thus the present issue of Mahler's *First* can be recommended on all counts, musical, artistic and technical. One need look no further for the definitive recording. W.

CONCERTO



Tchaikovsky: *Concerto in D*, Op. 35. David Oistrakh (violin) with the Saxon State Orchestra (Dresden) conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9755) \$3.98.

Brahms: *Concerto in D*, Op. 77. Gioconda de Vito (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Schwarz. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-5) \$4.98.

We have been reviewing Oistrakh records for several years and have had a hard time going all-out for any of them. Here, at last, is an LP by Oistrakh which we find to be just about perfect; it is easily the finest thing he has ever committed to discs, and we feel it is easily the best recording of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto yet to reach us. Oistrakh's playing is magnificent through every minute of this melodious but technically demanding work. His technique, phenomenal as it is, is not used at the expense of the lovely music it seeks to express. He most admirably puts the music first and his technical prowess second, resulting in a beautiful interpretation and, of course, a flawless execution. And what has, in the past, seemed like a none too large and elegant tone, emerges here with a richness and bloom most becoming to this romantic work, as well as being an ear-pleasing demonstration of violin playing.

Which brings us to the subject of the reproduction. Recorded by Deutsche Grammophon and processed by Decca, this disc is about the best sounding LP we have ever heard with the Decca label on it; and it is as nice a concerto recording as we can think of from the catalogs of any company. The Saxon State Orchestra of Dresden sounds like the old pre-war Saxon Orchestra, whose recordings were luscious indeed. Franz Konwitschny provides an accompaniment that is precise and sympathetic, well adjusted and with an admirable profile of its own. This is truly tops in Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto recordings.

If you like the thrill of "discovering" new artists, you should not pass up hearing the Brahms Violin Concerto played by Gioconda de Vito (she is not a new artist on the horizon by a good many years, but she is new to most of us). This distinguished Italian girl has a way with a fiddle that would bid well to make her concertmaster in any angelic orchestra that may be in the next world. It seems incredible that there can be so many really fine

recordings of the Brahms *Concerto*. It would take a page or two to give a fair comparative review of the eight or ten best; we can only say that Gioconda de Vito has a recording which belongs in with the best of them, and let your ears and your heart tell you the rest of the story. We will vouch for the fine reproduction of this disc and its quiet surfaces. S.

Mozart: (4) Concertos for Horn and Orchestra.

Dennis Brain (horn) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35092TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35092) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto No. 1 in D, K. 412; Concerto No. 2 in E-flat, K. 417; Concerto No. 3 in E-flat, K. 447; Concerto No. 4 in E-flat, K. 495.*

Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in G, K. 216. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218.** Arthur Grumiaux (violin) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3060) \$3.98.

Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 622. Reginald Kell (clarinet) with the Zimblar Sinfonietta conducted by Josef Zimblar. One side, and **Brahms: Trio in A minor, Op. 114.** Reginald Kell (clarinet), Frank Miller (violinello) and Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9732) \$3.98.

Mozart: Concerto No. 9 in E-flat, K. 271. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 15 in B-flat, K. 450.** Wilhelm Kempff (piano) with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra and Wind Ensemble of l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-998) \$3.98.

The first disc listed above shows at a glance that it has no competition, for here are all four of the Mozart horn concertos played by the world's acknowledged master of this difficult instrument. These four works are short gems written for a friend of Mozart, and they offer a field day for the performer (if he is good); they receive performances of incredible agility here, and the soloist is accorded fine accompaniments. Reproduction is excellent; what more can be said? This is a prize disc.

The Epic disc, presenting Mozart's *Violin Concertos Nos. 3 and 4* has to recommend it, above all else, a sweetness and style of playing that is typically Viennese, a style of Mozart performance which never fails to warm the hearts of many of us. Every note played is beautiful, whether by soloist or orchestra, and Epic's mellow reproduction is also in a sort of Viennese tradition. (The reproduction is not lacking in highs or brilliance, but it has a fitting quality and richness appropriate to the performances.) Arthur Grumiaux is a violinist of admirable proficiency and style, with a tone sweet as honey, definite in pitch; he is a complete pleasure in all respects. This disc struck us as something wonderful in a world too full of Mozart concerto LP's for a record reviewer.

The Decca disc is a re-coupling of two previ-

ously issued discs, each a 10" disc containing one of the works. This 12" disc provides a coupling of two much admired performances in well reproduced sound.

The pair of Mozart piano concertos again calls for favorable adjectives to describe performances which no Mozartean could help admiring wholeheartedly and which will also please the average record collector who is no Mozart specialist. Wilhelm Kempff has never offered a disc performance more nearly perfect in style and execution than this pair of concertos (two of the loveliest); and Münchinger has never directed a more exquisite disc performance. This disc has no peers among Mozart piano concerto records for performance or reproduction and sets an undisputed high-water mark for each of the works. S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Edwin Fischer (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-4) \$4.98.

Edwin Fischer, now in his sixty-ninth year, has been known to many American record collectors for a good many years, although relatively few of his recorded works are presently available on the new speeds. He has always been considered a pianist of excellent taste, good execution, and a good artist. His Mozart has been particularly admired; this is the first large-scale work to be released over here. Considering his style and temperament, as revealed in previous phonographic releases, it seemed odd to team him up with the late Furtwängler, a man with freer interpretive notions. Both men, however, pay great attention to detail, which is a good common meeting ground. Upon hearing the disc, we find that they turn out to be surprisingly compatible music makers. Furtwängler's contribution may be disposed of first and quickly by saying he directs what is easily one of the very best "Emperor" accompaniments one is likely to hear in a lifetime of concert going or record listening—and the noble Philharmonia plays his bidding with fabulous style and élan, sounding for all the world like the old Vienna Philharmonic in its heyday.

For those who want to find out how the "Emperor" should be played, how its technical problems should be solved, how every passage should be executed, this is the best lesson to be had. Practically every bar is a model of clear execution, and correct execution; which is no easy matter in this work, for there is a lot of mean writing that is often glossed over incorrectly. Fischer uses the sustaining pedal sparingly, which also aids one in following what is going on. However, it must be admitted that this is not the recording of the "Emperor" nor one to thrill most music lovers with the inherent grandeur that is in this masterpiece. For a version that hangs together better and moves on with sweep and bravura, one must turn to Serkin, Horowitz or possibly Backhaus, who is also blessed

with a notably good accompaniment under Krauss. Each of these men has a larger tone than Fischer, which is, indeed, becoming to the "Emperor." Fischer has many glorious moments in this performance, but the total effect is plodding, disconnected, and lacking in heroic proportions and forward thrust, despite a valiant effort to shore up the structure by Furtwängler. Reproduction is good and surfaces quiet.

Tartini—rev. Ravanello: *Concerto in A*. And **Marcello**—rev. Bonelli: *Aria and Presto*. One side, and **Rossini**—rev. Casella: *Sonata for Violins, Violoncellos and Double Bass*. And **Galuppi**—rev. Mortari: *Concerto No. 2 in B-flat*. I Musici. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35086TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35086) \$4.98.

Vivaldi: Concerto in D minor ("Madrigalesco"). And **Vivaldi**—rev. Giuranna: *Concerto in D minor*. One side, and **Vivaldi: Concerto in D**. And **Vivaldi**—rev. Giuranna: *Concerto in A*. I Musici. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35087TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35087) \$4.98.

Marcello—rev. Bonelli: *Concerto Grosso in F*. And **Vivaldi**—rev. Malipiero: *Concerto in F*. One side, and **Gabrieli**—rev. Giuranna: *Canzon in Echo Duodecimi Toni*. And **Albinoni**—rev. Giazotto: *Concerto in D*. I Musici. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35088TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35088) \$4.98.

We have been anxiously awaiting these first recordings of I Musici ("The Musicians"), a group of twelve graduates of the Academy of Saint Cecilia, Rome, which has been acclaimed "a perfect chamber orchestra" by Toscanini. The group plays without a conductor, and it is certainly a strong organization; they play beautifully.

We have no fault to find with the choice of numbers—all works of Italian composers of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. We especially like music of this period and are happy to note that apparently more and more persons are coming to enjoy it via phonograph records. Most of the works have been revised to make them palatable to 20th century ears; these revisions have not, we feel, taken anything away from the composers' original ideas.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: (6) String Quartets, Op. 18. Hungarian Quartet. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35106/8TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3512C) \$15.98.

With the Budapest Quartet (TNR Nov. '52) and the Vegh Quartet (TNR Oct. '54) having already issued the complete quartets of Beethoven, it would seem that there is hardly room for another set, even for factory-sealed Angels with miniature scores included. However, here is Volume I of the projected series, with the balance to follow. The reproduc-

tion is not so close-to as is the Columbia-Budapest set, which remains our preference.

Readers interested in the contents of the present set are referred to our October 1954 issue; the contents are the same as *HS-HSQ-N.

Weber: (6) Sonatas for Violin and Piano, Op. 10. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) and Carlo Bussotti (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL1006) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 10 in G, Op. 96**. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) and Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL1004) \$3.98.

Fauré: Sonata No. 2 in E minor, Op. 108. One side, and **Debussy: Sonata in G minor**. Christian Ferras (violin) and Pierre Barbizet (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL909) \$3.98.

That phenomenal technician, Ruggiero Ricci, presents a first LP of the pleasant little *Sonatas for Violin and Piano, Op. 10* by Weber; they were commissioned as a set of easy violin sonatas for amateurs, but the publisher turned them down, when Weber presented them, as being too good. Ricci, who can sail through a Paganini Caprice with the greatest of ease, and Bussotti make them as good as possible; but they are really not THAT good . . . Ricci's talents are better displayed in the two Beethoven works; and students of the piano are advised to hear this disc as an example of perfect rapport between violin and piano. The two instruments are treated, as they seldom are in these works, as equals, resulting in a pair of performances without peers . . . Our editor must be cramped for space in this issue, for we can see no other reason for listing the Fauré-Debussy disc with the other two; it is similar neither in nationality nor in chronology. The two sonatas appeared in the same year, the one a product of the 70-year-old Fauré and the other the last work Debussy wrote (the first of a projected series of six). Both are interesting: Fauré's seems to have more cement joining the movements, Debussy's seeming rather to be three hunks of dreamy fluff which harden when you grab at one. The disc is not for all music lovers; repeated hearings will almost certainly be required to grasp the full contents of both works.

CHORAL



Berlioz: Requiem, Op. 5. (Sung in Latin). Chorus and Orchestra of the Rochester Oratorio Society conducted by Theodore Hollenbach, with Ray de Voll (tenor). 2-12" discs in folder (*C-EL-53) \$5.96.

This is the first truly LP recording of Berlioz' unique *Requiem*, the other LP version in the catalog being a dubbing from 78 rpm discs made in France just at the close of World War II. The first thought that crossed the writer's mind after hearing

this set was what a pity it was that the recordings were not reversed, for the older recording captured a fine, even thrilling, performance while this newer one, despite its many excellent attributes, still falls short of what one knows can be done with the magnificently conceived score.

It is a little difficult to put a finger on what is missing from this performance, unless it is a lack of imagination on the part of all concerned. They seem a little overwhelmed (as well they or anyone else might) by their (or Berlioz') temerity, with the result that portions of the proceedings lack the fine abandon that is required. This absence of fire or spirit, call it what you will, is felt most strongly in the more dramatic pages of the score, such as the *Rex tremendae*, when the effects do not come off as expected. In the more lyrical passages conductor Hollenbach and his forces sing and play with considerable taste and feeling. It is unfortunate, however, that in the lovely *Sanctus*, which is beautifully sung by the choir, the tenor soloist displays an unattractive tremolo or wobble in his voice that mars an otherwise exemplary performance of the exquisite music.

This all adds up to the fact that here is a good, if somewhat uneven, performance of some of the most monumental music ever written. For those ardent Berliozians (and the writer includes himself in that select group) who can not wait, the set at its modest price, may prove satisfactory. On the other hand, at the rate recordings are being made and released, nearly every major work is duplicated (usually several times over) and the writer is inclined to counsel caution. Someone is sure to have a Berlioz *Requiem* or two up his sleeve. The sound here is pretty good, and the text and good notes are supplied. W.

Stravinsky: Les Noces. (Sung in Russian). One side, and **Stravinsky: L'Histoire du Soldat.** Soloists, Vienna Chamber Choir and chamber ensemble of the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-452) \$4.98.

Stravinsky followers will find this disc a choice one for their library. First off, it is recorded with a fidelity and clarity that leave nothing whatsoever to the imagination. The reproduction of *The Soldier's Tale* is as good as we have ever heard of a chamber group—which includes a percussion section to complicate the engineer's problems. *The Wedding* must have been even a greater challenge to the engineers, for it is scored for four soloists (soprano, mezzo, tenor, and bass) with four pianos and a generous conglomeration of percussion instruments. The music of *The Wedding* (Les Noces) annoys this reviewer from its first bar through every minute of the score, which he has never been able to listen to all the way through, anyhow. It makes no sense whatever, eludes him completely, and could result only in a bad case of nerves. This time it is sung in Russian, which makes matters worse; and the complete text, in

English translation, is printed in the jacket folder, but it is such idiotic nonsense that reading it is no help either. If this is music, then our education slipped a cog somewhere. The performance seems to be an intense one, featuring leading soloists of the Vienna State Opera, including Ilona Steingruber, a fine singer.

The Soldier's Tale is scored for seven instrumentalists: clarinet, bassoon, cornet, trombone, violin, double-bass, and one percussion part including drums of various sizes, cymbals, tambourine and triangle. Each section of the orchestra (strings, woodwind, brass and percussion) is condensed to a single treble and bass instrument. The instrumentalists are present onstage along with the narrator and the dancers. This is an entertaining sort of *divertissement*, designed to be humorous, which indeed it is in a most satirical and sophisticated way. It is typical of the post-World War I bitterness which crept into art, a kind of reflective ugliness of the period. But this is clever and entertaining music, if not necessarily elevating. This performance is a splendid one, about as good as one could imagine, with much credit due Mario Rossi for his direction of it. S.

St. Paul's Cathedral Choir. St. Paul's Cathedral Choir directed by Dr. John Dykes Bower. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35138/9TP) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3516B) \$10.98.

CONTENTS: *After the Blessing* (Davies); *Gabriel's Message* (arr. Pettman); *The Infant King* (arr. Pettman); *The Shepherds' Cradle Song* (arr. Macpherson); *Ding Dong! Merrily on High* (from Cambridge Carol Book); *Anthem for Christmas* (Bach); *A Spotless Rose* (Howells); *Hodie Christus natus est* (Sweelinck); *Hosanna to the Son of David* (Weelkes); *The Call, I Got Me Flowers, Easter* (from "5 Mystical Songs") (Vaughan Williams); *Ave Verum Corpus* (Byrd); *Ave Verum*, K. 618 (Mozart); *O Taste and See* (Vaughan Williams); *The Silver Swan* (Gibbons); *Weep, O Mine Eyes* (Ben-net); *My Bonny Lass She Smileth* (Morley); *Gloria, Qui tollis, Quoniam tu solus sanctus* (from "Mass in D minor" "Lord Nelson Mass") (Haydn); *Hail, Gladdening Light* (Wood); *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* (Baird); *Cast Me Not Away from Thy Presence* (Wesley); *Praise to Thee, Lord Jesus* (Schütz); *Coelos ascendit hodie* (Stanford); *Hear My Prayer* (Mendelssohn); *Round Me Falls the Night* (Drese).

In a most unusual album Angel issues this month a series of some twenty-six selections sung by the world famous St. Paul's Cathedral Choir. The Choir consists of thirty Boys or "Children of Paul's" and eighteen Gentlemen or "Vicars Choral." As might be expected, the group is steeped in the tradition of English music as well as the Church music of other countries.

The two discs here, as can be seen from the list of contents above, include many anthems and songs pertaining to the Church year as well as some of

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
O indicates 45 rpm.

the incomparable English madrigals. Composers from Morley to Ralph Vaughan Williams are included among the English writers, while Haydn, Bach and Sweelinck keep the concert from being one sided. Naturally Mendelssohn is represented by an aria, one of his loveliest: *Hear My Prayer, O God incline thine ear*.

The album has more than average musical and artistic merit. The wide range of styles encompassed by the many different selections offers no problem to the Choir; whether it is an old 16th century carol or one of Vaughan Williams *Mystical Songs*, they sing with unerring taste and sense of fitness.

The soloists, both men and boys, are excellent and obviously in love with their tasks. This results in a communicative performance, one that reveals new beauties on each hearing.

An interesting booklet is supplied giving historical background and the texts of the airs, songs and madrigals. As a souvenir of the Choir's American tour the album is invaluable: for those who were unable to hear them on the occasion their recent visit to these shores, it offers an opportunity to make the acquaintance of one of the great musical organizations of our day. W.

Choral Music of the 13th-16th Centuries. Quartetto Polifonico: P. Clementino Terni, Arturo Perruccio (tenors); Luciano Arcangeli (baritone); Edoardo Cassuto (bass). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-995) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: (5) *Laudi* (trans. Terni); (2) *Responses* (Victoria); *Ave de coelis*, *Hodie Christus natus est*, *Magnificat on the 4th Tone*, *Improperia et Hymnus* (from "Good Friday Mass") (Palestrina).

The issuance of records such as this always brings joy to the heart of your humble servant, for he can remember when no one would have dreamed of recording anything so esoteric as 13th century *Laudi*. *Lauda* is a name given to a song "sung by religious societies of lay singers in the eleventh and twelfth centuries." They were, in fact, popular sacred songs which "took the place of the Latin liturgical hymns no longer intelligible to the people."

Of the five *laudi* recorded on the B side of the present disc, the first two date from the thirteenth century and the last three from the end of the fifteenth. They are remarkable for their deep religious feeling and expressiveness. With the two *Responses* by Victoria (1548-1611) one is on more familiar ground, particularly with the first, *O vos omnes*. It is interesting to compare Victoria's setting with that of his younger and better known contemporary, Monteverdi.

Music by Palestrina occupies the A side of the record and here again, stylistically at least, one is on *terra cognita*. The four selections are all of prime interest—the writer found the *Ave de coelis* and the Motet *Hodie Christus natus est* full of a strange, unearthly beauty. For music such as this, one hearing

is far from adequate.

The Quartetto Polifonico is a group consisting of two tenors, a baritone and a bass. Their singing is a model of perfection and beauty. One is hard put to describe their sense of style, their accuracy of pitch and tonal purity.

More records such as this are needed, and one hopes this disc will enjoy the sale it deserves; in this way, perhaps, London will be encouraged to record more old music by these excellent singers. There are, incidentally, informative and well written jacket notes by Alec Robertson. W.

Yugoslav Rhapsody. Played and sung by members of the National Yugoslav Dance Theater. One side, and **Yugoslav Folk Songs.** Slovenski Octet from Ljubljana. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3071) \$5.95.

The cover on the jacket of this disc did not intrigue us, and we postponed this review so that it is the last one we wrote for this issue; and, having heard it, we are glad that we delayed because it gave us just the shot in the arm we needed at the end of a busy day. The *Yugoslav Rhapsody* is mostly gay, happy dance tunes (with an occasional mournful chant thrown in to break up the program); we don't profess to understand any of it, but the music is very infectious and started the blood flowing more quickly through these tired old arteries. The Folk Songs proved just as interesting but in a different way. Even though the English words are given, there aren't any bands separating the songs, and it's difficult to follow them. The Slovenski Octet are polished singers, though, and the songs are, of course, unhackneyed. We rather imagine that liking or not liking the songs will be a personal thing, and we can report only that we liked them.

Note that the \$5.95 price is correct; most Epics were reduced in recent weeks, but this and two others (at this writing) were not.

Gregorian Chant. (Easter Liturgy and Christmas Cycle). Schola des Pères du Saint-Esprit du Grand Scholasticat de Chevilly directed by R. P. Lucien Deiss, C. S. Sp. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35116TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35116) \$4.98.

It would seem that the demand for Gregorian Chant is not lessening, for here is another fine disc offering two Gregorian Masses: one for Christmas and one for Easter. An illuminating booklet gives a brief history of Gregorian Chant and the Latin words and English translation used on the disc. Diction is very clear, surfaces smooth and silent.

Bach Cantatas and Arias. Eileen Farrell (soprano), Jan Peerce (tenor), Bach Aria Group directed by William H. Scheide and the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6023) \$7.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under VOCAL.

OPERA



Verdi: Otello (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of l'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-24) \$14.94.

Otello.....Mario del Monaco (t)
Iago.....Aldo Protti (bt)
Cassio.....Piero di Palma (t)
Roderigo.....Angelo Mercuriali (t)
Lodovico.....Fernando Corena (bs)
Montano.....Pier Luigi Latinucci (bs)
Desdemona.....Renata Tebaldi (s)
Emilia.....Luisa Ribacchi (ms)

Otello is one of the seven wonders of the musical world—there is nothing like it under the sun. Now, thanks to some intelligent singing and direction along with some remarkably good recording, this magnificent piece is available to all in a performance that leaves little to be desired.

Mario del Monaco's *Otello* came as a surprise to the writer whose admiration for the young tenor's previous recordings was not exactly enthusiastic. In this role, however, many of del Monaco's liabilities are turned into assets. He stalks through the opera breathing fire and slaughter and manages to maintain a degree of excitement that is breath-taking in its intensity. The opening scene is thrillingly done and the love duet, while lacking a little in tenderness, comes off very well. The second act is marvelous, del Monaco progressing in a fateful manner from the moment Iago plants the seeds of suspicion in his mind. The third act duet and monolog rank with the best performances on discs, and the last act (by this time the listener is a little exhausted) is sinister and pathetic by turns.

Renata Tebaldi is a superior Desdemona. Vocally she is ideal, and dramatically she is always convincing. She is a somewhat more expressive singer than del Monaco; and in the duets, as elsewhere, it is she who provides the greater part of the feeling. The twin arias in the last act are movingly sung. Aldo Protti is an unexpectedly fine Iago. Where one has been accustomed to the bellowings of many baritones (some seem to think the opera is titled *Iago* instead of *Otello*), it is a distinct pleasure to hear a real baritone, who lets Verdi do most of the characterization and is content to be the evil plotter both Boito and Shakespeare intended him to be. A real surprise is the vocally superior and dramatically sound Cassio of Piero de Palma. He emerges as a fourth "star" of the performance.

Alberto Erede's direction is uniformly good—never mannered nor willful. Choral work is also on a very high level, and London's recording, while it seems a bit uneven (ranging from good to excellent), is always more than adequate. Certain large

scenes, however, seem toned down, notably in the third act (finale of the duet *Dio te giocondi* and in portions of the great ensemble that closes the act).

Despite these minor blemishes it would be difficult to imagine a better all-around performance of this thrilling and dramatic music. W.

Saint-Saëns: Samson et Delila (excerpts). (Sung in French). Risë Stevens (soprano), Jan Peerce (tenor), Robert Merrill (baritone), the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and members of the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1848) \$3.98.

This record marks, unless the writer's memory has become totally unreliable, Leopold Stokowski's operatic debut on discs. One realizes he recorded a series of condensed Wagner "music dramas" back in the Thirties (in fact, the writer was present at the recording sessions that produced *Siegfried*) but somehow they never seemed to be opera—they were, to use Stokowski's phrase (and he ought to know!) "symphonic syntheses." But what a debut this is! Backed up by excellent soloists, the Robert Shaw Chorale, the top-flight NBC Symphony Orchestra and RCA Victor's absolutely stunning recording, Stokowski makes *Saint-Saëns' Samson et Dalila* a dramatic masterpiece (which it isn't) and genuinely thrilling.

The disc opens with Peerce and Stokowski fighting it out over *Arretez, O mes frères*; Stokowski gives Peerce a hard time of it for a while; but Peerce survives the competition, and the scene winds up in a blaze of glory. Miss Stevens is not one of this column's favorites: her dark throaty tones do not please; but she sings the music of *Printemps qui commence* in excellent fashion. Stokowski controls the orchestra here and is content to elicit sensuous violin sound from the orchestra (he is a past master at this sort of thing). Then follows a similar treatment for *Amour viens aider ma faiblesse* and the extended love duet that concludes with the ever green *Mon coeur s'ouvre à ta voix*. The singing here is uniformly good and, thanks to his peculiar genius, Maestro Stokowski has the orchestra singing a love duet too—it is very unusual and most effective. Next is Samson's great scene *Vois ma misère* (very good this); what is probably the most rousing *Bacchanale* on records; and, to finish things off, the spectacular finale to the opera *Gloire à Dagon*, wherein Jan Peerce pulls the temple down on the Robert Shaw Chorale. The chorus screams, the orchestra adds to the commotion, and the net result is just about as much sound as has ever been captured on a record.

Despite all these lurid features (including the jacket cover) the disc is both good theatre and pretty good music. The star of the show is Leopold Stokowski; and, while there have been times when

the writer disagreed with his musical antics, this astounding demonstration of virtuosity can only command his respect.

W.



VOCAL

Bach: Geistliche Lieder und Arien ("Sacred Songs and Arias"). Hildegard Roessel-Majdan (contralto) and Hugues Cuenod (tenor) with Franz Holetschek (harpsichord) and Richard Harand (violoncello). 4-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-402) \$24.75.

Bach Cantatas and Arias. Eileen Farrell (soprano), Jan Pearce (tenor), Bach Aria Group directed by William H. Scheide and the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6023) \$7.98.

CONTENTS: *Cantata No. 60* ("O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort"); *Cantata No. 127*—Die Seele ruht in Jesu Händen; *Cantata No. 155*—Mein Gott, wie lang; *Cantata No. 99*—Erschutt're dich nur nicht; *Cantata No. 47*—Jesu, beuge doch mein Herze; *Cantata No. 79*—Gott, ach Gott; *Cantata No. 132*—Christi Glieder, ach bedenket; *Cantata No. 110*—Ehre sie Gott in der Hohe; *Cantata No. 41* ("Jesu, nun sie gepreiset"); *Cantata No. 42* ("Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbats").

In one of the most portentous offerings of the new year, Westminster issues the complete *Geistliche Lieder und Arien*. There are four LP's containing seventy-five songs from a collection of Protestant Chorales prepared by Georg Christian Schemelli and a few arias Bach jotted down in the second Anna Magdalena notebook. Schemelli's son was a pupil of Bach's—hence Bach's association with the undertaking. Space does not permit any more detailed discussion of the origins of the music, but for the purchaser there is an admirable fifteen page booklet and the complete Lea Pocket Score included with the set. This is, incidentally, the first complete recording of these pieces. There have been some isolated recordings of the various items, notably one on Bach Society (TNR Apr. '52).

Mme. Roessel-Majdan and M. Cuenod are both well known in this country via their many excellent recordings, and it is sufficient to say that they are both vocally and intellectually suited to the task of presenting the songs. The accompaniments by Holetschek (harpsichord) and Harand (cello) are tastefully and accurately played.

RCA Victor adds to the already swollen list of Bach Cantatas with three previously unrecorded cantatas and a group of seven arias (all from previously unrecorded cantatas also). The result of all this is a veritable feast for Bach enthusiasts, for the soloists include Eileen Farrell, Jan Pearce, Carol Smith and Norman Farrow, all of whom are accomplished singers, to say the least. For good measure there is the Robert Shaw Chorale and some of the remarkably fine

recording RCA is doing nowadays. A booklet giving the texts is included but further information as to the music is not in evidence. The performances are on a very high level and the set can be warmly recommended.

W.

Songs of Brahms. Nel Rankin (contralto) accompanied by Coenraad V. Bos (piano) with Carlton Cooley (viola). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8289) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: (4) *ernste Gesänge*; (2) *Songs for Contralto with Viola Obbligato*; *In stiller Nacht*; and *Sandmännchen*.

For the seventh recording of Brahms' *Vier ernste Gesänge* one ordinarily would be hard pressed to find something to say; but the present Capitol disc has several features worth noting. First is Miss Rankin's beautiful voice, a real contralto but never throaty nor poorly produced. Second, there is Coenraad V. Bos as accompanist. Mr. Bos was also the accompanist when the songs were first sung in Vienna, back in 1896, when Brahms was present in the audience. This constitutes, one may suppose, a sort of musical apostolic succession. Lastly, and this feature also applies to the reverse side of the disc, is Capitol's crystal clear and well balanced recording. Taken by and large, it is the most satisfactory recorded performance of Brahms' great setting of portions of Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus (from the Apocrypha) and I Corinthians.

Somewhat more accessible but none the less fine music are the two songs with viola obbligato *Gestille Sehnsucht* and *Geistliches Wiegenlied*. They are exquisitely sung, and Mr. Cooley's viola weaves a tracery of warm luscious sound that is as effective as it is beautiful. The two remaining songs are also little gems, particularly the lullaby *Sandmännchen*.

Texts and translations are supplied.

W.

Debussy: (3) Song Cycles. Flore Wend (soprano) accompanied by Odette Gartenlaub (piano). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-106) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Proses Lyriques*—*De Rêve*, *De Grève*, *De Fleurs*, *De Soir*; *Chansons de Bilitis*—*La flûte de Pan*, *La chevelure*, *Le tombeau des Naïades*; (3) *Ballades de François Villon*—*Ballade de Villon à s'Amie*, *Ballade que fait Villon à la requeste de sa mère pour prier Nostre-Dame*, *Ballade des Femmes de Paris*.

Debussy: (2) Song Cycles. Suzanne Danco (soprano) accompanied by Guido Agosti (piano). 1-10" disc (*LLD-9146) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Fêtes Gallantes*—*En sourdine*, *Fan-toches*, *Clair de lune*; (3) *Ballades de François Villon*—*Ballade de Villon à s'Amie*, *Ballade que fait Villon à la requeste de sa mère pour prier Nostre-Dame*, *Ballade des Femmes de Paris*.

Admirers of Debussy are fortunate, this month, in having made available to them two excellent discs devoted to the French master's songs sung by two first class sopranos.

The more ambitious of the two, issued by Haydn Society, consists of three song cycles, sung by Flore Wend. It can be stated simply that the record is superior from every angle, interpretive, artistic and technical. Mlle. Wend has a typical French method (i.e. the voice is produced in a manner that gives it a slight, but not unpleasant nasal quality) that is ideally suited to Debussy's dry and sometimes vague melodies. Despite the many excellences of the disc it is still a little bit difficult for the writer to sit through thirty-eight minutes of vocal Debussy—either his musical palate is jaded from too much Italian opera (perish the thought!) or he lacks the requisite imagination and temperament. Since one does not have to be able to lay an egg to tell a good one from a bad one, it is obvious to even these unsympathetic ears that Miss Wend does a fine job; her performance is one that would be hard to improve upon.

Miss Danco's London disc is also authoritative. This sterling artist seldom, if ever, gives a poor performance, be the music Bach, Berlioz or Debussy. As for the duplication, i.e. the three *Villon Ballads*, while there are superficial differences in interpretation the essentials are preserved in each case.

Haydn Society has supplied, as is invariably the case, comprehensive notes and complete texts; London's notes are superficial, and there are no texts. Recording techniques are also quite different. London favors a "close up" technique giving Mlle. Danco a somewhat bigger voice than she actually has; Haydn Society's seems to be in truer perspective, one feels, although this may only be the expression of a personal preference. W.

Bach: Cantata No. 211 ("Coffee Cantata"). Friederike Sailer (soprano), Johannes Feyerabend (tenor), Bruno Müller (baritone), instrumental soloists and Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. One and one-half sides, and **Bach: Cantata No. 203** ("Amore Traditore"). Bruno Müller (baritone) accompanied by Helma Elsner (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8980) \$5.95.

The second recording of the *Coffee Cantata* and the first of *Amore Traditore* are presented by Vox this month. In looking through the Schwann catalogue, the writer is constantly amazed by the number of recordings of Bach cantatas. There are, to be exact, seventy-six recordings (including duplications) of the various cantatas. Now, for one who can remember when a complete recording of one cantata was an event (remember the Orfeo Catalá recording of the *Wachet Auf?*) this state of affairs leaves him somewhat bewildered.

Quantity always brings with it a lowering of quality (you never get anything for nothing) regardless of what the material may be and, although Bach usually may be considered an exception to the rule, those who perform him are all too subject to the musical version of Gresham's Law. The two performances re-

corded here are no great shakes. Everything seems to be in order—Friederike Sailer is a first class soprano and has always been a favorite with this column; Feyerabend is a so-so tenor, Müller a pretty fair baritone. Rolf Reinhardt has been the conductor, in the past, of some very fine recorded performances; yet the sum total is just an ordinary affair, neither good nor bad.

The *Coffee Cantata* is, to the writer's way of thinking, silly. The music is elaborate, well and carefully worked out, but it gets nowhere. The other piece, *Amore Traditore* is a setting of those wild and frenzied texts so dear to the writers of opera seria. In addition, no autograph is extant, and some scholars feel the work to be spurious.

Recorded sound is good, the texts are included and there are some notes. This is one for Bach enthusiasts who might be making a collection of all the cantatas. As for the average record collector or music lover, it is suggested he hear it first. W.

Chapi: La Brüja. One side, and **Torroba: La Caramba.** (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Coro Lirico de Madrid and Agrupacion Sinfonica conducted by F. Moreno Torroba. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4930) \$3.98.

Chapi: La Revoltosa. One side, and **Caballero: Gigantes y Cabezudos.** (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Coro Lirico de Madrid and Agrupacion Sinfonica conducted by F. Moreno Torroba. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4931) \$3.98.

Guridi: El Caserio. One side, and **Serrano: Alma de Dios.** (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, Coro Lirico de Madrid and Agrupacion Sinfonica conducted by F. Moreno Torroba. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4932) \$3.98.

Caballero: Gigantes y Cabezudos. (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, chorus and Orquesta Sinfonica Espanola conducted by Rafael Ferrer. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65011) \$3.98.

Serrano: Los Claveles. (Sung in Spanish). Soloists, chorus and Orquesta Sinfonica Espanola conducted by Rafael Ferrer. 1-10" disc (*ANG-64003) \$2.98.

In December 1954 "W" made the statement that "... there seems to be a demand for ... (this type of) music ... , so one can sit back ... and expect more." And more there is.

Evidently there must be a sort of "musical vacuum" for this stuff, because Columbia makes no effort, and Angel only a slight one, to sell its discs. There are no librettos, only sketchy outlines of the plot (Angel is better here), and the titles of the bands (LP sides are divided into "bands") as given on the record labels are in Spanish. Of course, the singing is in Spanish. Perhaps we should write this review in Spanish; evidently this music is not for Americans, although there are surely some lovely melodies here, and occasionally a spirited orchestral interlude.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
O Indicates 45 rpm.

Torroba has arranged all of the Columbia *zarzuelas* (and no doubt abridged them); and he conducts them. Since *zarzuelas* contain dialog as well as music, the Angel discs may be said to be "complete" only in the sense that the London recordings of Gilbert and Sullivan are "complete"; the dialog is omitted.

So we can only say that these discs sound good, and the singers seem to know what they're doing; which is good, because we didn't. J.

Britten: Folksongs. Peter Pears (tenor) accompanied by Benjamin Britten (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9136) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *The Sally Gardens*; *Little Sir William*; *The Miller of Dee*; *Sweet Polly Oliver*; *The Bonny Earl o' Moray*; *The Ash Grove*; *A Brisk Young Widow*; *There's None to Soothe*; *Oliver Cromwell*.

Greek Folksongs. Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Andre Collard (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9147) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *The Little Lamb*; *The Spring under the Planetree*; *Rinaki*; *The Price of a Kiss*; *Sirtos from Paros*; *The Priest's Wife*; *Cradle Song*; *Dourou Dourou*.

Songs of Bellini and Gounod. Suzanne Danco (soprano) accompanied by Guido Agosti (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9144) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Il fervido desiderio*, *Dolente imagine di fille mia*, *Vanne o rosa fortunata*, *Vaga luna che inargenti* (Bellini); *Venise*, *Aur rossignol*, *Viens! les gazon sont verts!* (Gounod).

Benjamin Britten's settings of folksongs are very lovely to hear, and Peter Pears's tenor seems just right to record them for posterity, with the arranger at the keyboard. Pears changes his mood as the mood of the songs change, providing a delightful recital, ending with *Oliver Cromwell* which has brought to a close many a Pears-Britten concert.

The Greek Folksongs are less successful, in our estimation. They are sung in Greek, with no English texts provided and only the sketchiest notes as to their contents. Irma Kolassi has a nice voice, but she failed to get the meanings of the songs across to us in two playings; which is a pity, because some of the songs have most provocative titles and we'd like to have known more about them.

Although London also neglected to put English texts on the Danco disc, the always reliable Suzanne was able to impart meaning to the lovely Italian and French songs she essays; this, however, is not to condone London's too-frequent practice of eliminating texts which add so much to the enjoyment and meaning of the performances. Gem of the Bellini side is *Vanne, o rosa fortunata*, an aria-like number thrillingly rendered by Mlle. Danco, which will prove worth the price of the disc to many. J.

Mahler: (3) Rückert Lieder. Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9137) \$2.98.

Admirers of the vocal art of the late Kathleen Ferrier will be glad to learn that London has lifted the three *Rückert Lieder* from Miss Ferrier's great recording of *Das Lied von der Erde* (TNR Jan. '53) and issued them separately on this little 10-inch disc.

Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin (complete). (Sung in German). Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-6) \$4.98.

Judging voices from phonograph records is sometimes a hazardous affair—even criticizing a performance can become a difficult business. The present disc is a case in point. The writer can remember the advance notices on Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and he can also remember his disappointment on hearing the first records of this young singer. The reviews he wrote at that time were, if not unkind, decidedly unfavorable.

What to say now? One must eat crow more or less often in this business, and the writer certainly has an out-sized crow on his hands with this recording of Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*. This performance, it must be stated at once, is beyond a doubt one of the finest demonstrations of *lieder* singing to find its way on LP discs. It ranks with the almost legendary recording made by Gerhard Hüsch in the early Thirties.

In the writer's defense, he must say that Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau has made tremendous interpretive strides since his previous recordings; and, since he is still under thirty, there seems to be no limit to his possibilities. His voice, enhanced here by some of the most intimate and crystal clear recording these ears have ever heard, along with surfaces so quiet as to be absolutely non-existent, comes through as an almost perfect organ that responds instantly to his every wish. The results are such that words fail in describing them—definitely a disc to be heard, for description would either fall short of the truth or would be considered rank exaggeration.

Of the songs themselves it is scarcely necessary to speak. Fischer-Dieskau treats each individual *lied* as a part of the whole cycle (which it most certainly is), and the net result is a unified and thoroughly musical performance of one of Schubert's most melodious, yet most difficult scores.

The packaging is also a thing of beauty and features a superb reproduction of Vermeer's *The Cook* (doing duty here as *The Miller's Daughter*) and excellent notes on the music by Phillip Miller. The reader cannot be urged too strongly to purchase this set, for it is an even greater bargain when one considers its reduced price. W.

VIOLIN



Bach: Sonata No. 4 in D minor for Violin Solo ("Partita No. 2"). One side, and **Bach: Sonata No. 6 in E for Violin Solo** ("Partita No. 3"). Zino Francescatti (violin). 1-12" disc (*CML-4935) \$3.98.

A little solo violin goes a long way with us, and if you are that way, too, we urge you to sample this disc. Signor Francescatti, with his large tone, provides convincing performances if ever there were any. The student of the violin will likely be interested in the complete set of six sonatas, and he is referred to Heifetz (*V-LM-6105, TNR Jan. '54) or Schneider (*ME-MGL-1, TNR June '50).

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 2, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 2, No. 2.** Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-996) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in C, Op. 2, No. 3. And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 19 in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1.** And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 20 in G, Op. 49, No. 2.** Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-999) \$3.98.

Some more Beethoven Piano Sonatas this month by the light handed Gulda, featuring the first three Beethoven wrote. These are, of course, seldom heard and have not received the great popularity of Nos. 8, 14 and 23 (hear Badura-Skoda on these, *WEST-WL-5184, TNR Nov. '54). Gulda is a great artist; but we must say that, in all probability, those interested in these less popular sonatas will probably be interested in the complete cycle and will, therefore, want them all done by one artist, such as London's own Bachhaus. And we find it hard to believe that London could seriously be thinking of having Gulda do the complete thirty-two to compete with Bachhaus.

Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35. One side, and **Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58.** Alexander Uninsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3056) \$3.98.

Chopin: (12) Etudes, Op. 10. One side, and **Chopin: (12) Etudes, Op. 25.** Alexander Uninsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3065) \$3.98.

Moussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition. One side, and **Liszt: Rhapsodie Espagnole.** And **Liszt: (3) Paganini Studies.** Alexander Uninsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3066) \$3.98.

As there are plenty of recordings of Chopin's second and third sonatas in the LP catalogs, we can see little need for this one; the same holds true for the twenty-four etudes. Pennario's treatment and Capitol's packaging of the *Pictures at an Exhibition*

(*CL-LAL-8266, TNR Oct. '54) may be fairly said to be the last word in piano versions of this work; however, the reverse side of this disc offers the only piano version on LP of the *Rhapsodie Espagnole* on a major label and very fine versions of the three *Etudes after Paganini*.

Uninsky impresses us as a very fine pianist, and Epic's reproduction is well-suited to the piano; please, then, let us have this man's talent expended on works which need recording.

ORGAN



Bach Organ Works. Finn Videro, playing the organ at Kaerteminde, Denmark. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-128) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Prelude and Fugue in A; Prelude and Fugue in B minor; Pastorale in F; Fantasia in G.*

This is the third single record issued by the Haydn Society featuring the great Danish organist Finn Videro playing the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. In addition to these, however, there is the two record set of the *Orgelbuchlein* (TNR Feb. '54) and a series of harpsichord discs devoted to the *concerti* of Bach.

In this writer's opinion, there is no more distinguished musician recording today than Finn Videro, pronounced, to settle all arguments, Vih-DAY-ruh. In everything he does, his superior taste and intelligent musicianship, coupled with his rare ability to convey his obvious sympathy and genuine delight in the music, make each disc a musical treat of the first order.

None of the present works have ever been played or recorded better. Mr. Videro's registration and sense of style make them among the most satisfying performances of Bach's great music to find their way on records.

The *Prelude and Fugue in A* most likely dates from the Weimar period: that is, around 1716. It is Italian in character and, for Bach, very lyrical. The *Prelude and Fugue in B minor* was written in Leipzig. This is also a reasonably joyous work—B minor was one of Bach's favorite keys and he has showered arabesques and chromatic harmonies throughout the piece. The obverse side contains a *Pastorale*, an early work and also Italianate in character. It is rather unusual in construction, and Mr. Videro, in his excellent jacket notes, gives a reasonable explanation for its peculiarities. The concluding work, *Fantasia in G* also dates from the Weimar period (circa 1714) and is different in that Bach employs French tempo markings viz. *tres vitement, gayement*, etc.

The organ that is used is that of the Kaerteminde Church on the eastern coast of the island of Fuen, Denmark. It was built in 1938 and has thirty-one sounding voices, mechanical action and sliders.

Haydn Society's recording is superb, and the disc, for those astute enough to purchase it, will prove a real treasure. W.

Wagnerian Transcriptions for Organ (Vol. I). Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3126) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Tristan und Isolde*—Prelude and Liebestod; *Siegfried Idyll* (both trans. Ellsasser).

Concert Favorites Transcribed for Organ (Vol. I). Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3125) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Petite Suite* (Debussy); *Samson et Dalila*—Bacchanale (Saint-Saëns); *Finlandia* (Sibelius).

Do you suppose that Ellsasser is a frustrated conductor who couldn't get the orchestra to play the *Prelude and Liebestod* just the way he wanted, so he played it himself on the organ, on which he could control volume, rhythm, shading, etc., himself? We don't know whether you'll like Wagner via the organ; but if you do, you won't find a better man than Ellsasser to play it for you.

The Concert Favorites indicate that Ellsasser has taken certain liberties with the composer's intentions, but only to make them more suitable for the instrument. We liked the *Bacchanale* the best—especially when the artist pulls out all the stops and lets 'er go.

Music for the Organ (Vol. II). Edward Linzel, playing the organ at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, New York, and Ernest White, playing the organ in the Masonic Memorial Shrine, Washington. 1-12" disc (*MOLLER LP-6404) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Symphony No. 2* — Scherzo (Vierne); *Weihnachten 1914* (Reger); *Symphonie Gothique*—Andante (Widor) (by Linzel). *Dialogue and Musette* (Dandrieu); *O Gott, du frommer Gott* (Karg-Elert); *Ach, was Soll ich Sünder machen* (Pachelbel); *Schönster Herr Jesu* (Schroeder); *Prelude and Fugue in C* (Bach) (by White).

In September 1954 we reviewed with glowing enthusiasm Möller's first LP, which presented Ernest White in a selection of music in both old and new styles at the organ in his New York studio, a medium sized instrument. The present disc demonstrates two organs, one rather large of forty-some ranks and also a six rank organ called "The Double Artiste." The large instrument is in the Masonic Washington Memorial building in Alexandria, Virginia (the organ was built in 1954). Edward Linzel, a pupil of Ernest White, plays a group of twentieth century works that present organ tone in the "grand manner." This side has good music, well played and recorded, but it is on the

quiet side, generally speaking, only once does the organ speak with power (in the middle of the Reger), and one could wish for a bit broader tone now and then. What is heard is lovely.

On the other side of the disc Ernest White plays five numbers designed to exploit and demonstrate the resources and possibilities of an organ made up of only six voices (six ranks) enclosed in two swell boxes. What one hears is truly astonishing. It will prove enjoyable listening to the layman and will give those with a knowledge of organ design something to talk about for a while. Of course, every six rank organ is not so fortunate as to have an Ernest White play it, but any that does can certainly yield remarkable tones. The master of organ playing can derive remarkable things from any instrument; his accomplishments on this little job are a joy to hear. The reproduction of this disc is good; the side with the small organ is recorded at a rather high level, but it can be controlled on a good phonograph. S.



DICTION

Benchley's Best. Robert Benchley (monologist). 1-10" disc (*AUDIO RARITIES LPA-110) \$4.

"Write If You Get Work." Bob Elliott and Ray Goulding. 1-10" disc (*UNICORN UN-1001) \$3.95.

"This evening I want to give you a little talk on Swing Music, its origin, development and probable future; and then we might go into a short history of Italian Art in the 17th Century, and possibly scramble some eggs." With these words, the late, one and only Robert Benchley starts off on this record of four humorous bits: *Swing Music*, *Travelogue* (South Seas), *Travelogue* (Tibet), and *How to Start on a Vacation*. *Swing Music* is a Monologue, and is by far the most successful; but unfortunately it was evidently made from old (and we mean old) 78 rpm discs, and the surface noise is quite pronounced. The other three were probably taken from Benchley's radio show, for which we never cared much because the writers never gave Benchley a chance and always seemed to be pressing for laughs, not Benchley's style at all. We much prefer Benchley's low pressure stuff, as found in his many monologues familiar to his fans.

Bob (Elliott) and Ray (Goulding) caused quite a hubbub a few years ago with their "Bob and Ray Show," which we understand is still going on and can be caught in some parts of the country at certain odd hours. Their principal stock in trade is the spoof—the pointed jibe—at radio, movies, television, or other well-known subjects. Though some might feel that they overdo it, their many admirers will like this disc, which contains some of their best bits.

MISCELLANEOUS



A Folk Music Sampler. Soloists with accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA FMS-1) \$2.

CONTENTS: *Black is the Color* (Jean Ritchie); *Keep Your Hand on the Plow* (Frank Warner); *The Cruel Mother* (Shep Ginandes); *Ayizan Marché* (Haitian); *Ankaranin Tasina Bak* (Cynthia Gooding); *The Monkey's Wedding* (Shep Ginandes); *La Bamba* (Cynthia Gooding); *Le Joueur de Luth* (Shep Ginandes); *The House of the Rising Sun* (Hally Wood); *The Lowlands of Holland* (Cynthia Gooding); *Little Maggie* (Tom Paley); *Kansas City* (Sonny Terry).

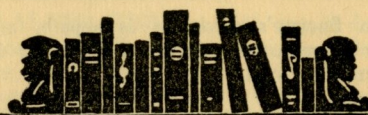
Elektra records are manufactured by the Elektra-Stratford Record Corp., which is the brainchild of a couple of young men, graduates of St. John's College, Annapolis (Md.). That this company is issuing some of the finest folk music on LP's today is a tribute to the industry and resourcefulness of these boys. In an effort to expand the already sizeable market for this sort of music, Elektra has recently released this sampler disc of a dozen examples of the great variety contained in its catalog. The jacket notes appropriately give the title and catalog number of the disc from which each sample is taken, in case you wish to pursue the artist further. At the bargain price of \$2, this should be a big seller.

The publisher of this bulletin has a limited number of Elektra catalogs and will be happy to mail one gratis to anyone requesting one.

The Columbia World Library of Folk and Primitive Music (Vols. I to XIV). Collected and Edited by Alan Lomax. 14-12" discs (*C-SL-204 to *C-SL-217) \$6.95 each.

CONTENTS: Ireland (*C-SL-204); French Africa (*C-SL-205); England (*C-SL-206); France (*C-SL-207); Australia and New Guinea (*C-SL-208); Scotland (*C-SL-209); Indonesia (*C-SL-210); Canada (*C-SL-211); Venezuela (*C-SL-212); British East Africa (*C-SL-213); Japan, The Ryukyus, Formosa and Korea (*C-SL-214); India (*C-SL-215); Spain (*C-SL-216); Yugoslavia (*C-SL-217).

Apparently Columbia has awakened to the demand for ethnic and folk music and has obtained a large part of the famous collection of tapes of Alan Lomax (who has recorded miles of tape for the Library of Congress). The above 14 sets are the first of a projected series encompassing a vast amount of such national music. The reproduction is very good. Those interested should investigate this new series, for this is authentic and is representative of some of the best work in this field.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, GSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ES—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Harp Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 O indicates 45 rpm.

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PAGE 16